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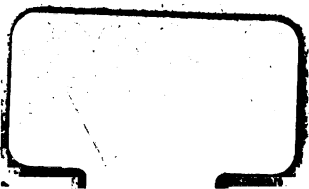
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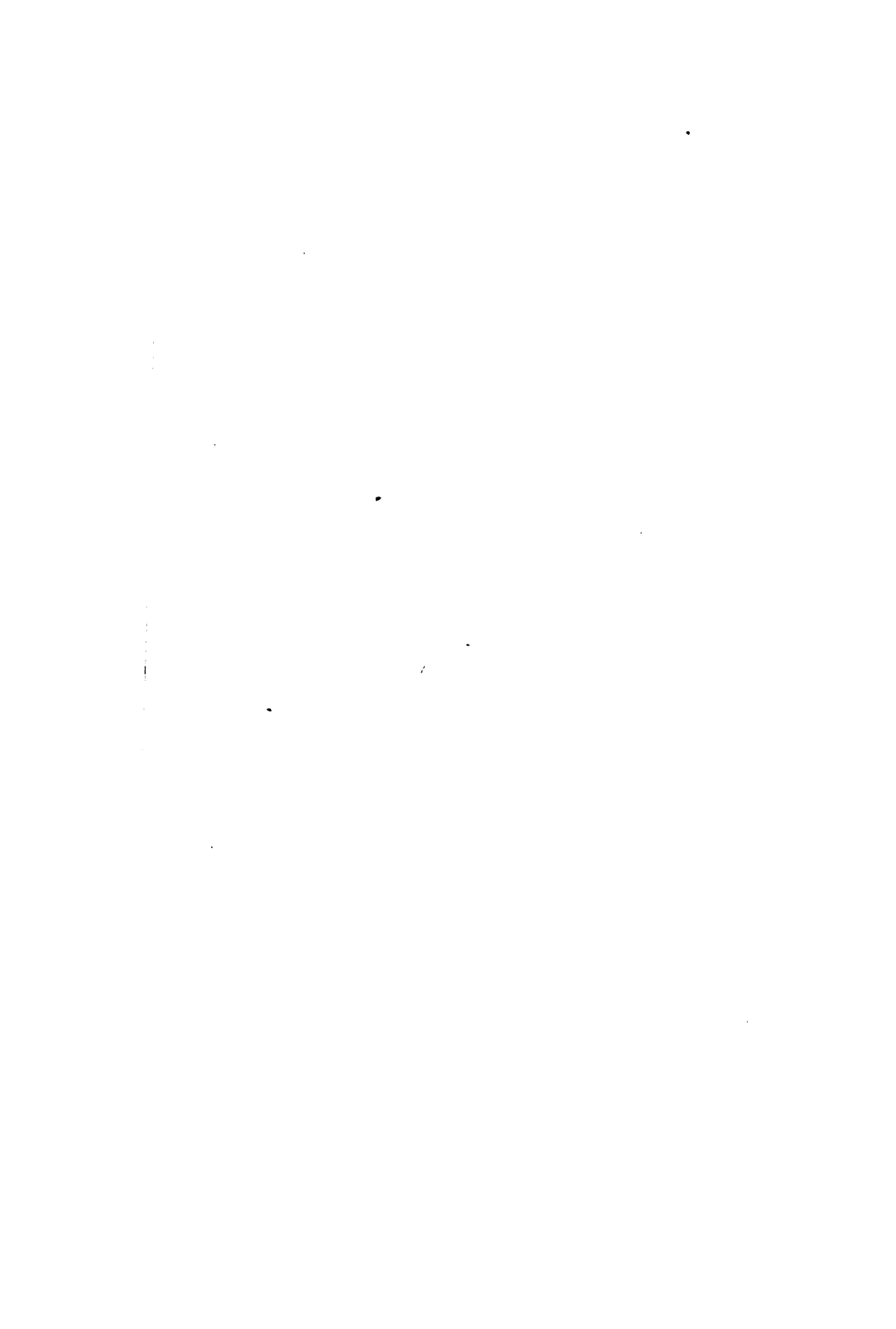
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CALLIRHOÉ.

BY
MAURICE SAND,
SON OF GEORGE SAND.

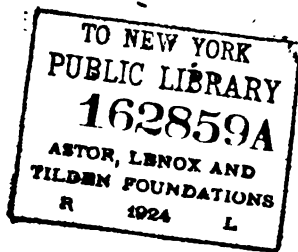
TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY
S. A. DA PONTE,
NEW ORLEANS.



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1871.

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CALLIRHOÉ.

PART I.

I AM not the hero, I am but the compiler, of the history which you are about to read.

At college I was intimate with Mark Valery, who, though younger than I, was more precocious and relatively farther advanced in his studies. I liked his generosity, his quickness of mind, his playful nature, and his expressive face; but even at that time I noticed in him a tendency to a state of mind which, for want of better definition, I called *illuminisme*, and for which I cannot even now find a better name. I am unable to explain this mystery—whether it was mania or only mental exaltation—without relating his history. We will then—you and I, reader—seek, to the end of the recital, and perhaps between us find the key to open the mystery of this tortured soul.

I must first go back a little into the past, that I may make the reader acquainted with the position of my friend's family.

Born in 1750, his great grandfather, Urbain Valery—Protestant and citizen of Sancerre by descent—made a rich marriage, and in 1771 settled at Lignières. His son Bartholomew embraced the profession of a lawyer at Bourges, and married there. He was sent

as representative to the Corps Legislative, and returned, during the consulate, to resume his profession and superintend the education of John, his son and sole heir. One fine morning, in the year 1807, he learned that his father—then in his fifty-seventh year—had contracted a second marriage. The following year he made a slight grimace on learning of the birth of a little sister, who was named Theresa, and who, it was said, would share the inheritance of the newly-married old man. A still more emphatic grimace followed, when, in 1813, he saw his son depart as a conscript.

Spoiled child, if ever there was one, John Valery grumblingly left the paternal roof, to go and fight in Saxony; but the battles of Lutzen, Leipsic, and the campaign in France, made of him a man and a good soldier. Discharged after Waterloo, he returned home, and his relatives scarcely recognized in this *brigand de la Loire*, with uniform dabbled with blood and dust, skin darkened with powder and sun, eyes kindled by anger and revênge, the fair rosy boy who had left them three years before.

After Bartholomew's death, John married Mlle. Amelia Dargan, daughter of a notary of Bourges. It was there that, in 1828, Mark was born.

The grandfather, Urbain Valery, despite his seventy-eight years, still mounted his horse, and attended all the rural fairs. While selling cattle and trafficking in wheat, he made the acquaintance of Silvain Désormes, a countryman enriched by the purchase of the lands, domains, and chateau of St. Jean, situate between Ardentes and Issoudun, sold in 1794, and paid for in assignats. The acquaintance between these two rich old men soon ripened into intimacy. The mar-

riage of Theresa Valery with Julian Désormes* cemented their friendship, and united their fortunes, estimated then (1831) at more than two millions. Two years after, M. and Mme. Julian Désormes informed their friends and acquaintances of the birth of Mlle. Marguerite, their daughter.

One day Mark, who had come to Lignières to pass a portion of his vacation with M. Urbain, found the good man, then eighty-nine, seated at the end of his garden, his head resting upon his breast, his hands crossed upon his cane: he seemed to be asleep. The child dared not awaken him. When the housekeeper, Rosalie Boe, who had been Theresa's nurse, came to call him to dinner, she saw that he was dead. Mark was sent to St. Jean's, to his great-aunt Theresa Désormes, and everything was sealed up till the opening of the will.

Old Valery had always manifested a preference for his daughter; he had given her all that the law allowed him to dispose of, without reckoning the large sums which, after his marriage, Julian Désormes had received from time to time. At last, everything being settled, Mme. Theresa was heiress to one million, while Jean Valery had but five hundred thousand francs. At this time he lost his wife, and his reason seemed unsettled. He hastened to convert his property into cash, left for Paris, and sent his son to the College Henri IV., where I knew him. Desirous of increasing his means, he risked his capital in speculation, and in 1844 had lost everything. He seemed to bear his reverses with resignation; but was in

* Silvain Désormes' son.

reality deeply moved, and I think that the sickness which carried him off was chiefly due to chagrin.

It became necessary for Mark, orphaned at sixteen, to think of some business which might give him a living. M. Désormes was named his guardian; but he could not rely upon his uncle's generosity. Mme. Désormes, his great-aunt, always showed him much affection, and did her best to aid him; but she did not hold the purse-strings. Mark consequently accepted a position as secretary to a learned German, the Baron de Weisberg.

Mme. Désormes died in 1845. Her loss was deeply felt by Mark, who mourned for her as for a second mother. Feeling alone in the world, he devoted himself with redoubled energy to his favorite studies, history, archæology, and the dead languages. To a hard-working German student his aid was invaluable.

Mark, the last of the Valerys, was what is called a handsome man; straight as a pine, broad-chested and slender-waisted, active as an Indian, with thick curling chestnut hair; eyes of dark blue, soft and tender when he was calm, but full of fire when excited. Being very ugly and ill-formed myself, I the more admired the beauty of my friend. My name is Cadanet. I am tall, thin, have a thick nose and small eyes, a red moustache, and lack three teeth, they having been knocked out by a ball through the cheek. This matters little! I have but a secondary part in this story.

Needing excitement, I had always dreamed of a military life. On leaving college I started for Africa. There I received Mark's first letters. These, his notes and other manuscripts which I preserved, aid me to supply the blanks in our correspondence. There are other blanks which can only be filled by the faithful

recital of what he confided to me orally at different periods, and by the letters of persons associated more or less intimately in his life. I do not know how he obtained possession of these letters. Most light will be thrown on this strange history by a journal which Mark kept, at the time, of his thoughts and acts. To explain such a practice in so active a young man, I must indicate the state of his mind as I knew it at the time of our first separation.

Mark's nature was cheerful—a strange fact, as his thoughts dwelt habitually, and somewhat whimsically, upon death. When he saw me astonished at this anomaly he would say: "It is because you have no knowledge either of life or of death."

He would then expound to me a system which he must have drawn from his dreams, and of which I will frankly say I understood very little. I noticed him often taking notes, and, when I asked him upon what interesting subject he employed himself so zealously, he would answer: "Many passing trifles have for me a grave significance, because they present themselves to me in the light of reminiscences of a past existence; but, not wishing to be duped by my own imagination, as often as possible I note all that strikes me, that I may recall them, and see if these impressions, which I believe to date from a previous life, have not come to me in the course of my present existence."

When Mark spoke thus I feared for his mind; but his perfect physical health, his fine judgment, his keen remarks on individuals, his faithful observation of facts, and, above all, his continual flow of rather satirical gayety, quickly reassured me; and, regarding him as simply eccentric, I left him without misgivings to his reveries.

Letter from M. Désormes to Mark Valery:—

ST. JEAN, May 20, 1850.

DEAR NEPHEW: I am writing to M. le Baron de Weisberg, as well as to you, to entreat him to grant you a month or six weeks' leave of absence, that I may arrange with you my accounts as executor, which, by law, I ought to have sent to you at your majority. More than a year has elapsed since this should have been done; attribute my delay to my numerous occupations, the worry of property, and of agents who never finish anything.

Now, thanks to my notary, M. Chassepain, all is ready. I ought, however, to inform you that of the hundred thousand francs, saved from the wreck of your father's property, I have had to expend a portion to defray the expenses of your education, and to pay arrears of two years at your college. Besides what has been sent you since you have been at the Baron's, there are other small sums; but we will arrange everything when we meet.

I might join you in Paris, but that would cost money; besides, I want to introduce you to friends here; so bring with you a fair supply of good humor.

I am as well as my fifty-eight years will allow. My gout leaves me in peace, and Margot does not trouble me much. At school this year she took all the prizes, even that of growth; but as I find that she is large enough and wise enough for a country girl, I have brought her back to the paternal roof.

She wishes you to bring her, not a doll, because she no longer plays with dolls, but a book on botany—*la Flore du Centre*, by M. Boreau.

A farmer's daughter ought to have some knowledge of plants. She also wants two dresses—not very

dear ones, you understand—one of rose-colored *Gaze de Chambéry*; the other a muslin, with bouquets à la *Pompadour*. She leaves the color to your taste. These details of a woman's dress are Chinese for me. However, the heads of young girls are filled with such fripperies. Write what day you will be here, and come as soon as you can.

Dolin, my servant, will meet you at Issoudun.

JULIUS DÉSORMES.

P. S. Don't forget to bring a black coat.

Mark Valery to M. Désormes :—

PARIS, May 25, 1850.

DEAR UNCLE: I shall be at Issoudun on the 30th, by four in the morning. I will bring you the book and dresses you wrote for. If you have other commissions, do not hesitate to send them. I am certain our family affairs will be in perfect order. In regard to them I depend on you. I made the stupidest figure in the world choosing the dresses for my cousin; but, happily, the bearded clerk knew his business better than I did mine.

My respectful compliments to Mlle. Marguerite, and my devoted friendship for yourself.

MARK VALERY.

Mark Valery to Auguste Cadanet, Lieutenant of the Spahis, Africa :—

PARIS, May 27, 1850.

DEAR FRIEND: If you write to me during the next month, address your letter to the chateau of St. Jean at Issoudun (Indre), to M. Désormes, the uncle of whom I have so often spoken to you. He has sent for me to arrange our affairs, and to pay me a sum that

will be a fortune for me. Visiting him just now disturbs me, as I am making some literary researches for M. Weisberg; but I will take my books with me and continue my work there. You know my employer is a learned German—a great inquirer. He makes me work for his profit, since he reaps all the advantages. I take note on note upon all that has reference to the human races. I pry into the obscure beginnings of history; cull from religious books; ransack the symbolic religions of India and Egypt; make extracts from every author treating on these subjects; and go so far as to seek in the bowels of the earth for traces of the origin of humanity. My head is sometimes crazed, and, if he does not make me an idiot with his ethnology, he will at least force me, by the researches I make, to doubt from whence I came and whither I go, since our immortal souls, I am persuaded, do nothing but pass and repass on earth. Do you remember my old speculations on the subject. You rather laughed at them then; I would oblige you now to study them seriously; they have grown and become more fruitful.

My studies do not prevent me, my friend, from being delighted to go and breathe the fresh breath of spring. I have been six years immured in Paris, and have felt, for some time, that I need pure air and sunshine. I can truly compare myself to a bulb buried all winter in a cavern, which, when spring comes, puts out its pale fibres towards some neighboring crevice—the place from which it can derive a little life. Shut up here I have seen many springs pass, and you can imagine what wild longings I have sent towards the workshop of Dame Nature.

Yet I do not complain of my position, which has

been improved, even since I last wrote to you. I am the Baron's librarian, with an increase of salary. How many learned and distinguished men do not earn as much as I do, and I am only twenty-two. I am not vain, and feel that I owe my new position much more to the Baron's kindness than to my own merit.

Good-night, dear Çadanet; write soon, and send me news of yourself.

Ever yours,

MARK VALERY.

Mark Valery's Journal:—

30th May. At four o'clock on the morning of the 30th I arrived at Exoldunum (read Issoudun) *Wassel-dun* in the Celtic—high mountain. Our ancestors, dwellers in the plains, entitled the smallest elevation in their noble steppes *dun*—whence the word dune is derived. I, for my part, love these central regions, the dwelling of the Gaul since time immemorial. All the names of the localities speak to the soul, and who can assert that the soul is not memory itself.

I had no difficulty in distinguishing the servant who was waiting for me. He stood stamping the mud in a beating rain alongside of a spring wagon, which, in my childhood, I had seen at St. Jean. To my inquiry, "Are you Dolin?" this brave man of Berry answered after the fashion of our mistrustful peasants by asking another question:—

"Are you the grand-nephew of your dead great-aunt?"

"Yes, my man."

"Ah, indeed, Monsieur! that's all right, then."

"Thank you; but take the baggage and let us start."

"I will in a minute," he replied, drawling out the

last word. His minute was rather a long one, as he took just a quarter of an hour to get my trunk into the wagon and fix his harness. Standing up in front, he started his horse with a crack of the whip and a Hi! that would have been creditable to a first-rate postilion. The animal stretched himself out, and started energetically at a brisk trot. The rain had ceased, and the first rays of the rising sun tinged the tops of the tall poplars. The magpies, already awake, hopped across the wet road, waiting boldly till we reached them, when they flew, screaming, almost from under the horses' feet, and, alighting a short distance ahead, repeated their chattering dance.

"It is clearing up, isn't it?" asked my coachman, standing up like an antique chariot driver.

I don't know whence my uncle fished up this Christian, but I have rarely seen an uglier one. He has the face of a merry-Andrew, is pitted by smallpox, has one eye smaller than the other, and squints so awfully that he looks sidewise like a chicken; an immense, crooked, disagreeably smiling mouth, and enormous ears decorated with gold rings and pieces of cotton, which fluttered in the wind. He is of middle size, has one shoulder higher than the other, hands big enough to fell an ox, and feet which would have frightened a shoemaker; such was Dolin.

"Are you not going to sit down?" I asked.

"The deuce! yes I will, if you will let me pitch your things into the road!"

My trunk, filling his place, explained his position. Muttering an excuse for the inconvenience which I caused him, I became silent. But I had gained Master Dolin's good-will, and he again drew my attention to the beauty of the weather, as much as to say, "Since

we are here *lête-à-lête*, let us have a talk." I hoped to avoid conversation by feigning not to hear him, but he returned to the charge, shouting as if to a deaf man—

"The weather is not bad!"

"Without doubt."

"What do you say?"

"That is not to be disputed."

"That may be, M. Valery; that may be."

Dolin had not understood a word of my answer; he said no more, but looked sulky. This I preferred, though I perceived that his cross-eye accused me of mocking him. The regular motion of a carriage throws me into reverie. I thought no more of Dolin. My eyes mechanically followed the carriage tracks in the road, as its silvered ribbons were unwinding indefinitely before me. Imagination flew away with itself on the wings of fancy, carrying me back to the past. I saw again my great-aunt as she was in my childhood, with her black eyes and stately presence. I recalled her movements, the tones of her voice, even the last caress bestowed upon me. I was then twelve, and had just lost my great-grandfather. All the wise and kind words spoken to console me returned to memory. The idea of death is not a sad one to children. I remembered that my little cousin Margot, who was but six, could not comprehend her mother's grief. It was an amusement for her to be dressed in black. I saw her again walking in her very short dresses, and very big straw hat, under the old trees of the park. I was so proud then of the confidence my aunt showed in me, so filled with the rôle of protector, with which I was invested, that I might have served as a model to good children. I must confess

that the little girl listened to me as to an oracle. Always smiling, singing, dancing, frisking about, beautiful and active, with her large black eyes seeming to fill her rosy little face, her fair hair tossed by the wind, she reminded me of a kitten. In my dream which, little by little, approached the present, I saw Marguerite grown. It was a beautiful young girl who was looking at me with a smile as soft as the breath of spring. I became her lover, she returned my love, and I saw that M. Désormes had only summoned me to his home to teach us to love one another forever. I asked her in marriage, and was accepted; I was even choosing dresses for my future bride, when that animal Dolin recalled me rudely to myself, saying: "There 's the chateau!"

My heart beat with pleasure at again seeing the old towers and the new façade of the chateau peeping from amid an ocean of verdure. The moss, or rather heath, as they call it here, spreads like a carpet through the forests, which lose themselves in the blue of the horizon. At this season it is a bed of flowering broom, daisies, heath blossoms, and sweet herbs, which sway and bend in the wind like ocean's billows.

"In a short hour we shall be at home," recommenced Dolin, determined, at any cost, to break the silence. "Ah! if you had only seen this country seven or eight years ago, as I saw it! Wasn't it ugly then? It was nothing but waste moors; but that 's all past; now it's rich field, wood, meadow, or pasturage. There's plenty of moor yet, but our master doesn't want to wait to clear all that; he says, says he, 'The earth is not ungrateful; it pays those who trust it.' Ah, the deuce! M. Désormes is listened to everywhere. There is not such a farmer for twenty miles

around. He makes a profit of fifty thousand a year on his animals alone. Ah, the deuce! but do you know Mlle. Marguerite will be rich one of these days? She won't want for husbands, you may be sure."

"I know all that, my friend; I know the country."

"That may be, Monsieur; that may be. Perhaps you come after Mlle. Marguerite yourself?"

"What folly!" I replied, unable to repress a movement of impatience at hearing this fellow mingle in the thoughts which had filled me a moment before.

"Excuse me, Monsieur, if I offend! It is because I am as curious as a martin. When I was at Mme. d'Astafort's"——. He was commencing a story when a black dog sprang, baying, from some bushes, and rushed across the road. The startled horse shied, jerking the wagon, and Dolin lost his balance. He would have fallen under the wheels had I not caught him. Recovering himself, he turned to replace my trunk, which had slipped on top of him. In stupid people fear engenders anger, and he commenced:—

"May the devil fly away with the dog and his master! The dog is a witch, Monsieur! And you, worthless pöny, I will teach you next time to mind anything but the stones in the road!"

Despite my remonstrances he beat the horse with the handle of his whip. The brute reared and plunged, broke a trace, and, becoming furious, backed down a declivity at the side of the road, and tumbled us all into a ditch! I saw Dolin and my trunk darting over me as if they were launched from a catapult. To avoid the collision I sprang out of the ditch on the further side, where I succeeded in keeping my legs, in spite of a violent blow on the head against a tree, which was so unaccommodating as not to make way for me.

It was now my turn to be angry, and I was already apostrophizing my unfortunate driver; but when I saw him rising from the ditch covered from head to foot with green mud, with his queer face and penitent air, in looking at the result of his stupidity, I could not help laughing at the misadventure.

"It's the fault of Father Carnot's dog," he said, wiping the skinned knees of the poor pony. "The old sorcerer has played me a trick. This is the devil's own country for witchcraft."

Comforting him as well as I could, I turned to walk to the chateau, whence I promised to send help.

"That will do," he replied; "St. Jean is not far. Follow the road almost to the fish pond; take the second path to the left; cut across the woods, and you *will fall* before the main avenue to the chateau."

"*Will fall!*" strange expression, which realized itself in its full meaning five minutes later.

I soon entered a wood of pines which I had seen as saplings. Their branches now towered thirty feet in the air. The sun was high above the horizon, and its heat caused the pine cones to burst with a slight snap, scattering their contents in the distant grass. The perfume of the resinous trees, and the balmy freshness of the earth, still humid from the last night's rain, were delicious. I inhaled deeply the sweet breath of the country. Millions of insects hummed over the flowers in the cleared places flooded with sunshine; birds chased each other in the thicket; a nightingale sang on my approach, as if to wish me welcome. I recognized the old gate, eaten by rust and covered with lichens, which terminates the broad avenue, giving access into the paddock. One of the posts, off its hinges, rests against a pillar, of which the capital

lies in the grass; the other is held in place by the serpentine folds of ivy.

My heart beat violently, I cannot say whether from rapid walking, or the pleasure of finding myself once more on the spot where the happiest days of my childhood had been passed. The truth is, that, on seeing at the end of the avenue the towers and pointed roof of St. Jean, I was filled with an emotion which compelled me to stop near the gate. The blood sang in my ears like a chime, and all at once I felt myself becoming faint and as if overcome by a strange repugnance to everything. I wanted to die, and I fainted.

I recovered to find myself in a large, high-posted bed, hung with damask curtains. I heard whispering, and saw before me a confused multitude of absurdly dressed people, who seemed dancing in the lengthening rays of a setting sun. Recovering, little by little, I comprehended that this was an old tapestry, and that I had mistaken the pictures for realities. A shepherd, in a white wig, dressed like a mythological hero, in the style of the seventeenth century, is seated at the foot of a large tree, whose amiable branches open with edifying complacency, in order to display the outline of a blue city on a rosy sky. The shepherd plays on an Italian bagpipe to three maidens dancing before him in constrained attitudes. A chubby faced zephyr is blowing from behind a cloud to raise the skirts of their faded tunics.

Behind the musical shepherd a big gray dog drinks from a stream of water flowing from a basin in the midst of the reeds. The animal seems removed from the fore to the background, without the least regard for the laws of perspective, and is so out of proportion that it would be impossible for him to enter the

gates of the city beside which he is standing; but through which, nevertheless, a cavalier enters easily, and without exhibiting alarm or surprise at the presence of a dog larger than his horse. Two fat cupids were lying in the stiff-pointed grass, weaving garlands for a white unicorn, already smothered in flowers.

It seems that the blow received against the tree in springing from the carriage was serious. It had been necessary to bleed me, to save me the trouble of marching off to some other planet.

Marguerite Désormes to Fanny d'Astafort:—

ST. JEAN, June 2, 1850.

A long time has elapsed, dear Fanny, since we have had a chat. But six miles apart, nevertheless one might say that an arm of the sea separates us. Oh! for our school days, when we were ever together. I have aged ten years in the last one. Do you know that I am seventeen? It is frightful how rapidly the days glide by, and yet each morning I wish it were evening. Life at St. Jean's is very monotonous. My father is so occupied with farming and improvements that I only meet him at meal times; indeed! I see less of him than any one else. He is everywhere but at home. Happily the arrival of his "little nephew" has broken the monotony.

I can see you open your big black eyes, and wonder from whence this child has fallen. You will think it is some little boy whom I feed and amuse. You are mistaken; he eats without help, talks fluently, and asks for nothing better than to jest. You will even find him a little matured when I describe him to you. He is at least five feet five inches in height; has a pleasing face, an aristocratic air. He is, in short, my

cousin, Mark Valery. Ten years ago, when he was last here, I was very small; but, when he recalls the past, I can remember it—can remember our boat sails; our long talks in the park where we went birdnesting; our plays on the terrace; our games of hide and seek with Nanniche—now my dressing maid—and even a frolic upon the open heath, whither we went, one day, without mamma's knowledge, to make bouquets for her fête. In picking a flower I put my hand upon a viper; hissing it raised its head. I shall never forget its open throat, from whence exhaled a fetid odor. I closed my eyes, and, on feeling it strike me, I fainted; but I had only been touched by the reptile's cold body. Mark, as it darted forward, had killed it with a blow of his stick. He carried me home, more dead than alive. Be sure, that, fearing to be scolded, we never boasted of the adventure. Since then, I have had a horrible fear of snakes. I can also remember how frankly I showed my cousin my love—I cannot do so now, he is too old.

I must tell you how he made his entrée here. Day before yesterday papa expected him to arrive with Dolin by eight o'clock in the morning. Poor Dolin! He is not less awkward now than when in your service. They did not come; and my father, who never likes to wait for any one, especially when breakfast is cooling, was as restless as a caged squirrel.

At ten o'clock he said, "Put on your hat and let us go and look for these *clampins*"—that is his word.

We were almost at the end of the broad avenue when we saw some one lying in the grass near the gate.

"Who is this drunkard that comes here to throw

off the fumes of his wine?" said my father, stalking up to the sleeper.

He was in such a bad humor that I feared a dispute. On approaching I saw a handsome young man, with closed eyes and bloody face, lying cold as death. I thought I should have fainted.

"Come, come, no weakness, no nonsense; it is my nephew. But what does this mean? What is he doing here alone, and wounded, perhaps dead?"

I ran home and sent to Ambrault for Dr. Thibaut, while a farmer and his son brought my still fainting cousin to the house. I put on an appearance of cheerfulness, though experiencing a grief I never thought it possible to feel for one who was so little known to me. Doubtless it was on account of our relationship. Our nursing was useless to revive him. Dr. Thibaut arrived, felt his pulse, and looked grave—a bad sign. Retiring to my own room greatly excited, I cried myself to sleep. Nanniche at length awoke me to say that the gentleman was saved, as he had spoken and gone to sleep. Yesterday my cousin was up and spent part of the day with me. He ransacked the library. What books and dust! I showed him the old pieces of iron, coins, and broken vases, found here from time to time. Interested in these things he talked learnedly, not tiresomely though, like M. Pillepuce, the *soi-disant* antiquary, who came from Bourges three months ago. You remember him, and how we amused ourselves at his expense.

All that Mark tells me I can understand. This morning he led me in imagination to an ancient city. Do you know what gave me the pleasure of the journey? You will never guess. It was the gold bracelet papa found while having the canal dug on the other

side of *la motte*. The antique jewel was the starting-point of a trip into the far past. Mark was drawn to speak of the luxury of the Grecian and Roman ladies, covered with rich silks and gauzes, their arms, necks, and fingers laden with jewels of inestimable value, their heads decorated with feathers, hair powdered with gold dust, and followed by slaves, some carrying large parasols, and others waving fans of peacock feathers. He talked so well that I fancied myself walking arm-in-arm with him, like village lovers through the antique crowds. I saw the fruit-sellers standing under sheds of striped linen in the open air; jugglers accompanied by flute-players; taverns where slaves congregated, seeking in intoxication forgetfulness of lost liberty; theatres; puppet shows, neither more nor less than those of the Champs Élysée, at Paris, with Punchinello and his big stick; men and women slaves being sold at auction; ladies carried in litters by Ethiopians, whose white garments set off their ebon skins. Preceded by runners I saw dandies in dazzling toilets, riding in four-wheeled chariots; young men on prancing horses, cantering beside carriages and chattering to smiling ladies, as in the *bois de Boulogne*. The trumpets sound; the crowds scatter. Here are lictors and heralds upon white horses, with violet-colored caparisoning; a person of high station, robed in purple, with banners borne before him, advances on a triumphal car. The crowds jostle, and brazen-throated instruments answer their shouts and the salutes of the people. The horses strike the resounding stones with their gilded hoofs; the chariots rumble noisily over the dusty roads, and we both flee, while admiring the heavy-armed cavalry. Oh, how happy I was! While he spoke I embroidered;

but I assure you that I have much of my work to pick out. I was myself so identified with his recital, and had so entirely forgotten the lapse of time, that I asked, naively, whether he had visited Rome at that period. I felt the folly of my question when he answered, "That may have been." I pouted all the evening because I made a mistake.

By the way, he brought me from Paris two very pretty dresses—one is for you; but, as I wish you to choose, I will bring them both to Dressais one of these days. Waiting anxiously, I embrace you as warmly as I love you.

MARGUERITE.

Mark Valery's Journal :—

3d June. I have visited every portion of the chateau and park, where I left my souvenirs of childhood. St. Jean lies eighteen miles south of Issoudun, in the midst of the heaths and woods of that portion of Berry named in other days Boischaut. It is bounded on the north by immense fields, designated here by the name of *Champagne* (Campania).

The chateau, partially rebuilt under Louis XIV., is flanked by two wings, forming a solid square. In each angle is a tower; the largest is the donjon or belfry, with its machicolation, watch tower, pointed roof, slender chimney, and mullioned windows, of the fourteenth century. On the side of the court the chateau is entered by a flight of eight carved stone steps, and by a great vestibule. To the left is the dining-room, to the right the drawing-room, furnished *à la* Louis XV., with woodwork painted in white and gold. The panels above the door representing hunting scenes.

The mantles are white marble, with plate glass and

candelabras upon them. The donjon, near the drawing room, has long been used as a library. It communicates with the room which I occupy in the left wing, though I may leave my chamber without passing through the ground floor of the donjon. Mr. Désormes and his daughter occupy the first story.

I was pleasantly surprised to find the library composed of quite a number of very good books. I did not expect such luck, as my uncle does not pique himself upon his erudition or literary tastes. I know the books belonged to former proprietors of the estate. Marguerite has them well arranged. She is intelligent, and reads much. Her taste is rather for the serious.

Fifty feet from the chateau the stables open upon a grass-plot. Here, debouches before the entrance, the broad old elm avenue, at the further end of which I fainted. Pieces of linen sheets and other evidences of a recent wash are spread over the hedges, wood-piles, and fagots; newly-cut planks encumber the turf, denoting the little taste, and little care, of the proprietors of St. Jean.

The garden is not better kept. I remember the borders carefully cultivated by my aunt. Now, thorns, thistles, and hemlock are the only ornamental plants; they cover all the walks. The terrace, where exotic shrubs and flowers were once carefully ranged, is now covered with wild vines and hops. A dozen orange trees in worm-eaten boxes, and a few sprigs of geraniums in their broken pots, now wilt in the sun—the last remnants of what has been a precious collection.

I remembered a clematis bower, beneath whose shade I have often seen Mme. Désormes during a part

of the day sewing or reading. I still see this good woman scarcely raising her eyes from her embroidery, except to glance at us children. Sometimes, nevertheless, she used to gaze at the blue horizon, showing above the forest trees; she would sigh and quietly resume her work. This frequent sigh struck me. I asked myself why my aunt was not happy; children do not understand the pangs of *ennui*. My aunt was dying under our eyes from the time of Marguerite's birth. Now the trellis of the green arbor is rotted or broken; the gardener has turned the benches into drying places for onions, and the perfume of the mignonette and rose are replaced by the smell of garlic and leek. A pair of old wooden shoes, a watering-pot, a jar where snails await the honor of being served on the master's table, a bunch of twine, and a mousetrap lie, with other wrecks, scattered around in the grass and dry leaves.

The lower pasture is turned into a kitchen garden, and, in place of flowers, I see cabbages. The walks, beaten in ruts by the rain, are filled with sorrel and parsley.

It is not for me to criticize my uncle's ways; but, in seeing such carelessness, one would believe he was only the farmer of this land. Marguerite, nevertheless, has a taste for order and elegance; the interior of the house, thanks to her, is well kept; but it seems that her authority is concentrated and limited there. The confusion, in which I find everything that recalls the past, saddens me.

The fish pond has washed away its banks. It now extends to the avenue of elm and linden trees. No longer trimmed, these monarchs of the forest reach

their branches over it, and dip their boughs into its cool waters.

The boat in which I made my first trial as a sailor remains in my memory as large and beautiful as the stateliest vessel; here it is battered, split open, and stranded in the midst of reeds, mud, and water plants.

All the grassy steps and knolls are broken or flattened by the grazing cattle; indeed, you can sit nowhere without finding traces of the chickens, cows, and sheep that wander hither and thither without restraint. The park, once laid out in the style of Marly, is no more than a wood, in which only traces of paths are to be found. That portion of the ground lying around the farm being more useful is less neglected. Beds of lucern, clover, potatoes, radishes, &c., fill it. In the last century one of the former possessors of St. Jean, wishing to protect his game, took the pains to surround his preserves with walls six feet high; but M. Désormes, having no near neighbors, found it too costly to keep up this wall, and preferred leaving his paddock open to the wild boar and wolf, which sometimes enter the premises and destroy his potatoes or his dogs.

* * * * *

During the day Marguerite showed me some ancient coins, and other relics of past ages, found around here. I proposed to my uncle to catalogue and make a report of them to the Antiquarian Society of France; but the offer did not seem to meet with much approbation from him.

"You may catalogue as much as you like for yourself, but I do not care that the public should know what I have or what I have not. If you like, amuse yourself by arranging in the library the antiquities

that are worth the trouble, and throw away those which are broken or worthless."

When I showed him the value of these curiosities, and when Marguerite told him that she was much interested in them, he replied :—

"Well, arrange the knick-knacks as you like; I am going to see to my meadows."

And he went out, leaving me *tête-à-tête* with my cousin. We went to work, and our museum soon put on a respectable look. Hatchets and arrow-heads in flint, Celtic weapons, Gallic, Greek, and Roman coins, dagger blades, brass and bronze rings of various sizes, bronze plates which seemed to have belonged to a cuirass, an iron casque, unfortunately badly damaged, statuettes and vases—one of them almost perfect, resembling in shape a Greek vase—and glass phials, called lachrymary vessels, which in reality are but little essence bottles. All these things were found around here. My cousin took real pleasure in our work. She addressed me questions in her sweet voice, whose tones trouble, yet please me, concerning everything, and opened her great eyes with astonished intelligence at my answers. This course of archæology, with so pretty a pupil, has for me a great charm.

I do not know that Marguerite is really handsome. There are moments when I find her adorable, and, nevertheless, at first sight there is nothing striking, if it is not the contrast between her thick, curling, fair hair and her dark-brown eyelashes, eyebrows, and dark hazel eyes, the expression of which is that of perfect gentleness and goodness. On the whole, she is charming. Her nose is small, her mouth well-formed and filled with beautiful teeth, which she shows when she laughs with the frank naturalness of a child.

Her hands are delicate, her feet small, her figure elegant, her walk graceful and firm. At home, no awkward gesture ever disturbs the general harmony of her air. She is not only distinguished in appearance, but very seductive, and well fitted to inspire deep and perfect love.

Why has she been so cold, so reserved with me during the evening? Have I, unconsciously, said anything to annoy her? Why does M. Désormes make me come here in relation to a business so easily arranged by letter? Has he some project for me in connection with his daughter? His advice to bring a black coat—a useless dress here—puzzles me more than is reasonable. Has he really ideas of marriage? No, I am too poor! This is madness. But if this is not to be, he is very wrong to leave us alone together as he does. Never mind! I will watch over myself. I am too true a man to wish to disturb the life of this child; I impose silence upon heart and soul. I neither wish, nor ought, to give way to the great attraction that draws me towards Marguerite. Marguerite! what a sweet name. I must get to work:

Fanny d'Astafort to Marguerite Désormes:—

MY LITTLE PET MARGUERITE: I read and re-read your long letter, seeking a clue to your real thoughts. I think I have found one. Let me tell you what you do not know yourself, yet betray in every line of your letter. It will surprise you, will it not, when I tell you in a few words that you love your cousin, Mark Valery?

Yes, Marguerite, it is really so! But what will astonish you more is that M. Mark came to the country only to be presented to me as my future husband.

For some time my mother has been extolling the marriage, and has shown me a rose-colored future in comparison with the straitened circumstances in which we live. Yet have I feared to exchange my free and tranquil life for a more brilliant position; but, since you love him, my dear, he must love you, who are so good and pretty! I have now nothing to fear, and you free me from a great anxiety.

You have kindly promised me a dress, and mamma has made me a lovely one for the day when he is to come as a simple visitor, whom she already jestingly calls her son-in-law. She exhorts me to show off, and wishes to arrange my hair, and dress me herself on that important day. Poor mamma, if she knew how she was losing her time! Only, Marguerite, I ought to warn you not to let your heart lead you astray. Have you remembered that your cousin is without fortune, and that your father will never consent to your union? I am older than you, and consequently more thoughtful. I have the right to say: Reflect upon the trouble you lay up for yourself if you oppose your father, who has doubtless a wealthy marriage in view for you.

Indeed, Marguerite, it will be better to school your heart to look upon Mark only as a relative, and not allow friendship to turn into a warmer feeling, and one that I fear may render you very unhappy. Do not for one instant imagine that I advise you in order to keep Mark for myself! Poor fellow! I could not love him at first sight, especially when I know that his heart has already been assaulted by my dearest friend. A truce to pleasantry; I hope he may one day become your husband; but, if he asks me for advice, I shall warn him only to love you as a sister.

You have raised my curiosity to see him who has been the first to awaken love in my Marguerite's innocent heart. I await your visit with impatience, that I may see this handsome "little" nephew. Think over what I have said, and have confidence in her whom you call your wise friend.

FANNY D'ASTAFORT.

Mme. d'Astafort to M. Désormes:—

DEAR NEIGHBOR: So M. Valery has arrived at St. Jean, and you have not notified me! You are a real *Berrichon** in dilatoriness. You waited six months before commencing this to me important negotiation, and, when he has only to be seen, you do not even inform me.

What a dawdler you are! I am so anxious to see our poor Fanny married! Do you know that she is twenty-one this year, and that there is no time to be lost?

If you think it best, speak at once to your nephew. You know my intentions in regard to my daughter. I will give her a dower of two thousand five hundred francs income from my property, which nets me five thousand, and a suitable trousseau; more I cannot do. Come, old friend, awake from your torpor and bring me M. Valery, my future son-in-law, and for whom I have already a fancy.

Your sincere friend,

BLANCH D'ASTAFORT,

. BORN TOURTIAUX.

P. S. Ought not M. Chassepain to be notified, that the contract may be ready?

* An inhabitant of Berri.

M. Désormes to Mme. d'Astafort:—

ST. JEAN, June 5, 1850.

DEAR MADAME: If I am, as you say, "dawdling," I find you a little too hasty. You must give my nephew at least time to recover from the effects of an accident he met with on the day of his arrival.

Do you fear that he will fly away, and do you wish M. Chassepain to draw up the marriage contract before the young people have even met? Why not also notify the mayor and priest to be in readiness? Were I in your place, I would write to them on the subject.

Do not be impatient. To-morrow, that is, Thursday, I will introduce my nephew to you. I have as yet said nothing to him. You had better also leave Fanny in ignorance of our project, that she may meet him without embarrassment.

When I hand over my accounts to Mark, he will have an income of about four thousand francs—this is very pretty for a young man. You give your daughter two thousand five hundred; they ought to be able to live very comfortably with that; and so much the more, that they may, if they try, double the income in thirty or forty years. She is a thoughtful girl, who will make Mark's happiness her own. Thus, everything being for the best, we have only to bring them together.

While waiting for the important to-morrow, dear madam, accept my best wishes and warmest friendship.

DÉSORMES.

Mark Valery's Journal Notes:—

4th June. During what geological era did man appear? In the same, probably, with those gigantic

mastodons, to-day extinct, whose fossil remains are only found in the miocene of the tertiary period.

Does antediluvian man, whose possible existence has been positively denied, really exist? Axes and flint implements, mingled with fossil animal bones; the arrow-heads of flint, or pointed with bone in the peat bogs; the fossil animal of an extinct species, struck with a stone arrow-head, lying near the buried bones; the human bones found near Puy by M. Agmare, etc., prove that man existed at an epoch long anterior to the flood; that he is contemporaneous with the volcanoes of Auvergne, and perhaps saw the Alps and Pyrenees arise. If this be proved, why seek on the Altai and Celestial Mountains, among the Mongolians and Laps for the birthplace of the Celt?

* * * * *

There is a nightingale's nest built in the trees under my window. The male sings while I work, without troubling himself about antediluvian nightingales; he thinks only of love.

5th June. Uncle and I went to Ardentes to arrange family affairs with the notary, M. Chassepain, a little wizzened-up man with gruff voice, long nose, white cravat, gold spectacles, and a false white toupee.

To my great disappointment the notary excused himself for not yet having had the time to collect the papers and verify the accounts. This is real "berri-chonne"* dilatoriness—they have always time in this country. M. Désormes did not seem surprised at the delay, and contented himself by entreating the notary to hurry the business. We then returned to St. Jean. I have lost the day, but I will go to work to-morrow.

* Berrichonne, relating to Berri, in the province of Aquitaine.—*Mentelle, Géographie Ancienne.*

6th June. Marguerite, at breakfast, told me of two Roman or Gallic camps quite near here—one in the direction of Corny, and the other at Brives—and of some remarkable tumuli at Maron and Presle. We had determined to make a pilgrimage to the tumuli, when uncle interfered, saying:—

“We must go and pay Mme. d’Astafort a visit; we are behindhand with her.”

I begged to be excused from joining the party; but Marguerite teased me so, treating me like a shy bear, and mocking me, that I had to go and don my famous black coat. My cousin, dressed two hours before the time, was ravishing in her rose-colored robe. According to her, we should never finish breakfast; in her impatience to start, she accused us of greediness and intemperance. At last she declared that we should never have the time to go to Dressais and back: it is thus that they call the chateau where we are going, and where Marguerite’s most intimate friend lives. This explains to me her joy and noisy gayety. Master Dolin is installed upon the seat. He had mounted his red vest, oil-cloth cap, and white knit gloves, and was so proud in his high perch that he scarce condescended to look at his master.

“Dolin!” cries M. Désormes, with affected anger—always evidence of great good humor on his part—“if you have the misfortune to break any of our necks, I will break my cane over your back.”

“Oh! nonsense, monsieur! I am driving the two grays, and they are as gentle as lambs,” replied the original.

After traversing Ardentes (ancient Alerea), we followed a broad road which crosses the forest of Chateauroux, losing itself in the heaths of Arthon.

This ancient road, called here "*Levee de Cesar*," is a Gallic highway, which led from Argenton (*Argan-dun*, the beautiful mountain) to Bourges.

The carriage stopped in a court-yard, before a short flight of stone steps. My uncle introduced me to a lady of some fifty years, short, fat, and red face. Her hair, that is to say her wig, was chocolate colored, and surmounted by a cap with stiff ribbons of pretentious yellow, rolled in spiral curls on each side of her temples. The dear creature hurried us into the house, expressing great surprise at seeing us, pretending that she did not expect the visit. Nevertheless, her flounced silk, lace collar, watch chain, rings, and locket too large for a brooch, too small for a picture—representing a gentleman in daguerrotype—fastened in the middle of her vast chest, showed that she was in full dress. She bustled around, pushing a piece of furniture here, hitching her dress in the doors, and wishing to make us take refreshments. She did not know what to do to be amiable and prepossessing. Her daughter, a tall brunette, with glossy black hair, seemed very intimate with Marguerite. I thought she kissed her too often. Such warm caresses amongst women seem like friendship which it is necessary to display in order to prove it sincere.

On the wall, two frightful, squinting portraits, with crooked mouths, reproduced the features of the late M. d'Astafort and *Madame*. The lady, judging from the picture, had been blonde, before acquiring her present chocolate hue. A square piano stood in one corner; music books and a work-table in the embrasure of a curtained window; the floor was covered with new matting, which crackled when walked upon; a row of straw chairs stood fronting

some mahogany and red Utrecht velvet fauteuils ; on the mantle stood a fancy clock, representing a golden troubadour dressed in slashed tunic, and shod with funnel-shaped boots, playing the lyre before a lady dressed in the fashion of the restoration ; vases of shell flowers under glass shades and candelabras, with branches supplied with candles, were placed on either side of the clock.

When all were seated around the table, a coarse-looking servant, a clumsy creature, brought cakes, fruit, beer, brandy, and cigars ; evidently this lady did not expect us at all.

"M. Désormes," said our hostess, "make yourself perfectly at home ; you understand me ; as if you were at home ;" turning to me she continued :—

"We are old friends, monsieur ! Will you not take a cigar and a glass of beer ? Smoke without hesitation : my poor husband accustomed me to tobacco smoke. Fanny ! offer the gentlemen fruit. I have heard something of a fall you had on your arrival, caused by Dolin's stupidity. He was in my service once ; after he had upset me twice I sent him to M. Désormes as a present, without asking any return. However, he is as faithful as he is stupid. Did Dr. Thibaut attend you ? He is a good doctor and has a large practice. Fanny ! cake for the gentlemen. How do you like the country ? I hear you are fond of antiquities. You will find many relics in this neighborhood. I hope we shall have the honor and pleasure of seeing you again. You stay in Paris the whole year, do you not ? We have had beautiful weather for three days," etc. etc.

The good lady had taken me for the aim of her eloquence. These foolish questions were poured forth

with such astonishing volubility, that the beginning of one did not await the ending of the other.

It was a regular deluge. Marguerite observing, doubtless, that I was almost overwhelmed under the fire of words, arose and proposed a walk through the garden. Taking Mlle. Fanny's arm, light as a bird away she flew. I could see her making a huge bouquet. I felt that I must incommode my uncle and Mme. d'Astafort, who were whispering near me; I was dying to go and help Marguerite plunder the fields, but dare not: I feared to appear too eager to be near her; and I cut a foolish figure all alone, stamping my feet in the sandy path behind the parents. Mme. d'Astafort came to my relief by saying: "Well, sir! are you not going to join the young ladies? You do not yet prefer the company of old folks to that of two handsome young ladies?"

I only needed a pretext, and, bowing, hastily flew rather than ran to join Marguerite.

"Mark! come carry my flowers for me," she called. I commenced this story gayly; I hardly dare continue it, but I must; I wish to note down all the events of my present life. This was the first time, since my return, that Marguerite had not called me *Monsieur*. I was so delighted that on receiving the flowers from her pretty hand, I forgot all the good resolves which I had made to myself. Drawn on by uncontrollable emotion, I pressed my lips to her arm. Marguerite remained silent, but turned scarlet as the poppy in her hand. Mlle. Fanny had turned her back upon us. I believe that she had not seen either my cousin's confusion, or mine, for I was so moved by my own audacity, that my head turned as if I had committed a crime. After a long silence, during

which I dared not look at Marguerite, she whispered: "You are not amiable with my friend; you have not yet spoken to her, nevertheless she is very handsome."

"I do not think of Mlle. Fanny, I can only see you," I said in a tone which seemed to reproach her for the avowal I had made. She gazed into my face; her eyes strove to read the depths of my heart. Did she see all its love, all the devotion, all the respectful admiration with which she inspired me? She lowered her long eyelashes, as if to say: "There! that is enough; you have offended me deeply," and petulantly breaking the long grass touching her hand, she joined her friend.

What would I not have given if I had said nothing; I wished to follow, and obtain her pardon; but her intolerable companion was constantly at her side. Mlle. Fanny would never pardon me, could she have guessed how heartily I wished her to the devil. I followed them at some distance in the fields, bounded on one side by the forest of Chateauroux, rising like a wall of verdure, and on the other by a belt of poplars and elms, through which the blue waters of the Indre could be seen. I was sad—angry with myself. The thought of having offended Marguerite pained me so deeply, that I desired to weep. Yet what I said to her could not draw upon me her hatred, the hatred of her whom I loved more than all the world—her for whom I would like to die. No! it is impossible! I misunderstood the meaning of her look, and I, who thought myself reasonable, I, who had made fine determinations of indifference, of calmness, and of coldness, am here madly in love!

Marguerite recalled me, and, without speaking,

gave me a new armful of flowers to carry. I thought her eyes looked tearful, and I ventured to whisper: "Cousin! you, the only relative I have in the world, the only being I love in the world, will surely forgive one who is devoted to you body and soul."

"Speak to Fanny, or she will take you for a bear," was her only answer. I obeyed; what could I not have done to please Marguerite? I forced myself to play the amiable to her friend during the walk over those seemingly interminable meadows. She must have found me very stupid. At length, the visit over, to my great joy, we started for St. Jean, through heavy and stormy weather. Marguerite was so silent that her father more than once observed it.

"This is the effect of visiting your friends," said he; "you look as if you had lost all your relations."

Marguerite tried to recover her gayety, but she was absorbed. Twice I caught her disturbed curious look turned upon me. I don't know what she read in my eyes, but she suddenly commenced to weep.

"There!" said my uncle, "we only needed that. What has seized her? That's the way with girls; they laugh and then they cry. They are as changeable as the weather."

I tried my best to divert her thoughts; but not understanding the cause of her grief, I did not know what to say. She stopped me abruptly, saying, "Let me alone," and burying her face in her handkerchief, burst into tears.

After dinner we went to the parlor. It rained. Marguerite retired early, pretending the storm had given her a headache. Is it so? Is she sick? Is she angry? I do not know what to think. I am disturbed; and am not master of my thoughts or

actions. I live as in a dream, where I move in spite of myself; where I speak against my will; where I start on a course I ought to avoid; where I seek what I ought to dread to approach—nevertheless, I am alive to the danger which attracts and fascinates me. Have I no longer self-consciousness? Is love a fatality?

Marguerite to Fanny.

St. JEAN, June 7th.

I come to you, for I need consolation; there is no one but you to give it to me. For many days I have not recognized myself; I am oppressed with pain and devouring melancholy. It seems to me that I have fever, and that if I could only weep in your arms I should be comforted. But you understand nothing of this gloomy commencement; is it not so? Yesterday evening I felt so sad, that I resolved to search my own heart. I thought of all the events that have occurred lately. Little by little I deciphered a name in the bottom of my heart, and this name was—*Mark*. Since then I have learned that you were right, when you said that I loved your intended husband. I recalled the smallest incident of our yesterday's walk in the fields, when I wished to struggle against the charm and return to you him who is to marry you. When, to obey me, he offered you his arm and walked at your side, talking of I cannot say what. Oh! then, Fanny, I was like one distraught. I accused you of cruelty; I believed, at the moment, that you would gladly steal Mark's love from me. Afterwards, I was ashamed of my wicked thoughts, and it is to accuse myself that I write to you, and at the same time to entreat your pardon. Tell me again, tell me constantly, that you do not

love Mark, do not wish to have anything to do with him, and that he did not utter one word of love to you. I did not wish to listen to your conversation. I did not listen to it, yet suffered cruelly at not hearing it.

Write to me, then, or if you can, come, and bring me consolation; but whatever you do—love your

MARGUERITE.

Mark's Journal.

8th June. Yesterday Marguerite was sad and pre-occupied. She was shut up in her room; I scarce saw her. My uncle took me to see the reapers; what a singular pleasure trip. At dawn this morning M. Désormes left here to visit his farms at Lignières. He cannot return before to-morrow. This *tête-à-tête* of two days, during which he leaves me with his daughter, convinces me that he has unbounded confidence in me, or that—But why nourish vain hopes? My uncle does not dream of seeing in me Marguerite's affianced husband; or at least he feels sure that she is not disposed to second his views.

She did not come to breakfast; we have not met to-day. I hope to see and speak with her in the evening, but while waiting dinner, Dolin informed me that she was at Dressais with her friend Mlle. Fanny, and would not return before to-morrow evening.

I feel that she avoids me; that I am hateful to her. Dear child! whom I wish to see happy! I am the cause of her recent dejection, perhaps of her first grief. This suffering is too great! I cannot remain here; I will leave as soon as M. Désormes returns. She cannot love me, and yet I hope that she retains her past friendship. It has been so long since we met,

that in reality she has known me but eight days. Perhaps she loves some she has seen at Dressais. How the supposition irritates me. I am as jealous as if she belonged to me. By going to Dressais I can learn the truth. But what right have I to meddle with Mlle. Désormes. My brain is on fire. I suffer dreadfully.

I will try to work a little at the ethnogenic résumé on the Celtic races requested of me by M. de Weisberg. But what are these dry researches among which the learned force us to wander? What other conducting thread would memory furnish to us in this labyrinth of primitive facts, if we knew how to exercise the faculty of remembrance as well as we can exercise the faculty of induction.

Every one of us has, however, existed since the primitive ages of the world, and must have been affected by those prodigious events which by their shock, have transformed him from age to age into a new man, but always into the eternal "me."

Do I remember the deluge? and what proves to me that I do not? Why stupidly defy those reminiscences which are the consciousness of the soul, and treat them as vain hypotheses fashioned by the imagination? May not the madman be the only sane person in Bedlam?

9th June. I am here alone in the house, and trying earnestly to work.

NOTES.

The first notions of our race do not ascend higher than forty centuries before the Christian era. The Greeks gave the name of Celtes (men of the forest) to all Gallic tribes indiscriminately which declare

themselves to be descended from *Gaidhel*, son of *Nemédh*. Who was this *Nemédh*? The personification of the race. Is he the *Nomad* of the Greek?

The word race annoys me. Why have not the savans accepted the word "family" as it is used in natural history? Then "family" would be divided into *genus*, *species*, *varieties*, *sub-varieties*, *individuals* and *sex*. But the pride of man forbade his being confounded in this manner with other animals. Let us then say, *races*, *branches*, *types*, *sub-types*, and *characteristics*. Marguerite, her naturally waving blond hair, black eyes, astonished at being so large—fair skin, delicate extremities, graceful form and medium stature, belongs to the Indo-polynesian family of the genus Caucasian, species Celtic, variety Gallo-cimric, of the sub-variety *Berrichonne*; individual, blond, with black eyes and eyebrows.

But I perceive that I completely lose sight of my ethnological notes, and that my cousin alone occupies my thoughts.

The word Eden is Celtic, and signifies—the land of man. I do not know where I have read that the Celt was the first and complete creation of God.

What matters the place where the Eternal planted a garden, be it in Gaul or the environs of Erzeroum! It is not less certain to my mind that the Celt, German, Slave, Hebrew, Arab, Egyptian and Hindoo, are children of the same family—the Aryan. In the vocabularies of these different people are found a vast number of common roots, derived from a primitive language. It is the same with their traditions, and spiritualistic ideas.

The Druidical religion is perhaps superior to that of Moses and to Greek paganism. Judea represents

in the world the idea of an absolute God; Greece and Rome—man and society; Gaul—immortality.

The Druids said that death is but the middle of a long life, and that the souls of those who die rose to a happier existence. *Ab aliis post-mortem transere ad alios*, said Cæsar. The dogma of pre-existence is held with great distinctness among them; I think with the bard Taliesin, that "we have existed in the oceans from time immemorial," and that the soul is contemporaneous with creation. For myself, have I been a "spotted serpent of the mountain," or a "viper in the lake," before being myself? Was I in the vessel with Dylan, son of the sea, when, like the spears of an enemy, the waters poured from the heavens into the abyss?"

Who was Dylan, but the Noah of the Hebrew Genesis, the Xixonthros of the Chaldeans?

Did the Celts bring or receive from the East the idea or tradition of this cataclysm destructive of a great civilization?

The Pythagorean ideas of metempsychosis, an idea systematically developed amongst the Hindoos, but foreign to the Greeks, was borrowed from the Egyptians. Did our Druids drink from the same source before the grèat Aryan family was divided?

A mysterious triad of our bards, precious monument of Celtic belief, makes me understand that my soul is yet only in the *Abred*, the circle of transmigrations, and that I cannot recall the past.

"Three primitive calamities in *Abred*: necessity, loss of memory, and death," and nevertheless I ought to force myself to recall all things to fit myself for participation in the happiness promised in *Gwynfyd*, the region of the blest. Oh! then, my poor soul,

tormented with the desire of remembering itself, can only think of Marguerite. 'Have I loved Marguerite in previous existence? I believe so. There again I wander.

* * * * *

She returned this evening. These two days have appeared to me everlasting. As soon as I heard the carriage wheels on the sand I ran and opened the door for her, saying, "At last you have come," as if I had not seen her for six months. Blushing and smiling sweetly, she placed her pretty pink hand upon my shoulder to descend from the carriage, saying:—

"Then you have been very lonely without me?"

"Lonely! no; desolate!"

"Well! I have not been less *ennuyée*. Has papa returned? Ah, here, Mme. d'Astafort gave me this for you."

Before going slowly up the broad stairway she handed me a small box containing some Roman coins. During dinner my uncle spoke of the harvests and of farming; but addressed himself much oftener to Dolin, who always answered him.

To what race do men of my uncle's type belong? He is of medium height, and rather full habit. A large forehead and bald head, lively blue eyes shadowed by thick gray eyebrows; a drooping nose, round at the end, and covered with a hair mole. His thin lips indicate, according to Lavater, a satirical disposition with a touch of selfishness. His white whiskers contrast with his skin, burned and reddened by exposure. His manners, from association with the peasantry, are brusque yet full of frankness. Of a careless disposition, he allows himself to be ill served rather from a dislike of change than affection

for his servants. He neglects the care of his flower garden, lets weeds grow in the court-yard, but clears the waste land with energy, and will not suffer one thistle in his wheat: "To make the earth sweat," as he says when in good humor, is his only passion, and his only topic of conversation. Fatigued by constant exercise in the open air, he sleeps the moment he sits down. Rising at four in the morning, he passes the time in overlooking his laborers, comes to breakfast at ten, afterwards lights a cigar, goes into the parlor to read, spreads out his paper and sleeps regularly, before the first column is half read. Towards noon he re-lights his cigar, walks up and down the room three or four times, consults the barometer, goes out, and does not return before six.

Julian Désormes is the son of a peasant enriched during the revolution by the purchase of St. Jean and the extensive heaths sold as national estate. His father, whom I knew in my childhood, was a keen and very suspicious man in business; but the most honest person in the world. He had but one aim, to save money in order to buy lands and extend his possessions. My uncle was bred in these ideas, received a sufficiently good education, and became a gentleman. He has the *parvenue* pride, and tells all who will listen to him that he glories in being the son of a laborer, which would not prevent his daughter becoming a marchioness or countess any day it pleases her, money being everything, and rank very little in this world.

He will delay a week making a visit, or writing a letter. He goes nowhere without his daughter. He is at once saving and generous; he will refuse himself a garment, and haggle over a bargain for thirty sous,

and the following day expend the economies of six months in a dinner to his friends. I remember his refusing his wife a twenty-five franc dress, and the next day bringing her from Issoudun a five hundred franc lace shawl.

10th June. I like to come and lie on the fresh green grass which grows under the shade of the old elm tree avenue. One of the trees throws its great withered arms above a mass of foliage; the other, shattered on the top by lightning, spreads its fan-like branches, and tries to push aside its neighbors. Their huge trunks, covered with mosses and lichens, rise like pillars to support this arch of verdure and interlacing branches.

So well was I hidden behind the hedge that Marguerite came to my side without perceiving me. What charming grace pervades her being!

Forma placet, nivuesque color, flavique capilli.
Happy flowers, that her white skirts brush in passing! they bow their heads as she approaches, as if rendering homage to their queen, and all those little golden flies singing around her fair head, murmur in her ear, "*Bonjour, Marguerite!* let us kiss thy sun-gilded cheek." Her two big dogs saw her, they ran towards her and sought to gain her notice by their playful gambols; but she walks without giving them one caress, without even looking at them; such is not her custom. Does she weep? The sound of a carriage at the end of the avenue caused her to retrace her steps. She disappeared behind the hedge; I could not resist the wish to join her. I had to obtain her pardon, if I were the cause of her grief; if not I wished to console her, as I did in her infancy, when she brought all her little cares to me.

But on rising, I suddenly found myself face to face with Mme. d'Astafort and her daughter. Those women are decided bores. I had to help them descend from their sort of high caleche mounted on wheels and submit to the flood of words with which the elder lady, who treats me as an old friend, overwhelmed me. "Well, master Mark," she said, taking my arm, "how have you been for the last four days? Did Margot give you the coins I sent? Oh! you need not thank me; I did not value them. Fanny! why don't you speak to M. Mark? What a foolish girl I have. I really do not understand the education now given to young girls at school. They are so absurdly reserved. I don't know whether it is from novels that they learn to be so awkward. Stop! you are dragging a brier bush after you. Say, M. Mark! you know what ought to be said on such an occasion. It is a lover she drags after her. If it makes no difference, I will call you Mark. Oh! as for me I make no ceremony with people whom I like. I wager that sleepy-headed Désormes is not at home. It must be very dull for Marguerite to have such a father. He loves her, there is no doubt, but he thinks very little about her. In his place I should have left Marguerite at school until her marriage; besides, the child is too young to keep such a house as St. Jean's: there ought to be a woman at the head. Mme. Theresa never did have any other will than her husband's. It would not be I that would allow this uncleanness before the chateau; it makes me sick; since I shamed M. Désormes about it, it is a little less dirty."

Dolin came to my rescue, cap in hand; he looked smilingly at Mme. D'Astafort, and admiringly at

Mlle. Fanny. "Here you are!" said he familiarly. "Madame is well, I hope, and the young lady also?"

They went to the parlor, and Dolin brought refreshments.

"That's not a bad idea, good Dolin," said the coarse woman, fanning herself, "for it is shocking hot to-day. Is M. Désormes still pleased with you?"

"Oh! madam, we get on very well together," replied Dolin. Marguerite at length joined us, gay, smiling, and graceful. I was deceived; she had not wept, or she had got bravely over her grief. M. Désormes also entered, in a white linen coat, his hat upon his head, and his boots dusty.

"Ah! you arrived in the nick of time. I am going to offer you forbidden fruit—a fine young cony and a quail. I got myself wet in the field *la morte* with the laborers." Turning to Marguerite, he continued:—

"They will bring you some knick-knacks for your museum of antiquities. Come, ladies, a turn in the garden will give you good appetites."

"Your garden is beautiful," remarked Mme. d'Asta-fort, reproachfully; "are the cows still pastured in it?"

"No, no, they do not go there any more."

"And the gardener! Have you found a gardener at last?"

"I am expecting one."

"Heavens, what a man! You see," said Mme. d'Asta-fort, addressing me; "that I shall be obliged to find him one."

"By my faith, madam, I take you at your word," replied M. Désormes, as we left the room.

We walked towards the little fish-pond. I had a great desire to go to the field *la morte*, to see the ground in which the workmen had found the relics,

but politeness forbade; and besides, Mme. d'Astafort's rough talk began to amuse me.

She spoke loud, laughed, sat down, arose and walked quickly; it was a perfect play to watch her. At length, she took my arm—while her daughter was walking with Marguerite—and when we were some distance said:—

“We disturbed you, M. Valery; admit that you were very much preoccupied.”

“If I were not near you, madam, I would reply that it is my habit.”

“You are wrong to busy yourself in books. They say that for you savans the vanity of attaching your names to the discovery of some old utensil, is life and happiness.”

“You have not much sympathy for the scholar, then?”

“I don't say it for you, because you are not a tiresome savan; and it is to prevent yourself falling into their faults that you would do well to take a little recreation. It is necessary at your age, and in the country. My daughter and I will be delighted to see you at Dressais sometimes.”

“You are very kind, and since you permit it—”

“I insist,” she interrupted, with an almost tender inflection of her voice. “Would you dislike living in the provinces?” she recommenced, after a few moments of silence—

“Not at all; on the contrary, nothing would please me more than to leave Paris to come and breathe the pure air of the forests and meadows.”

“Ah! then, why do you not try to marry here?”

“To marry! It seems to me when one has no fortune, the first thought should be to assure one's self

of an independence. You are not absolutely without means; and money cannot buy happiness. I pity young girls who, like Marguerite, are only married for their gold."

"Mlle. Désormes is certainly sufficiently handsome, intelligent, and good to deserve to be loved for herself."

"With what ardor you speak! Would not one say that there is but one Marguerite in the world?"

Here was a chance of complimenting her daughter; but I was too stupid to find anything *à propos* to say, and only knew how to insist upon my cousin's merits and charms.

"Ah bah! do you know you speak as if in love? Take care, her father is ambitious for her."

"And I," I replied quickly, "have only the feeling of a brother towards her."

Mme. d'Astafort was content with my reply. I saw that she had no injurious curiosity. A few moments afterwards we seated ourselves on the bench beside Marguerite and Fanny. Mme. d'Astafort, making some excuse, arose and carried Marguerite off, to go and see I do not know what. I was about to follow, when Mme. d'Astafort said: "Fanny is tired; wait for us here."

I remained alone with Fanny, who, without showing any astonishment at her mother's conduct, began to talk with great freedom.

I found that she had sense, knowledge of the world, and some education for a provincial girl, blessed with such a mother, and living in so limited a circle. I believe her very intelligent, but already spoiled or dwarfed by the spirit of narrow-mindedness which surrounds her. She is, if not malicious, at least

censorious, envious perhaps, for she found means, while eulogizing Marguerite, to show me the little faults which she attributes to her.

"Marguerite is a child," said she, "a child without will. Oh! I know her; she is five years younger than I am. At school, she was my little girl; I guided her as I pleased. She is soft wax, retaining the impress of the last speaker until another comes and places upon her the seal of his will. Her father, who loves her because she has never contradicted him in anything, has already made up his mind in regard to her. He is a real rustic, cunning and tricky, who has but one idea, to extend his possessions; an egoist, who will sacrifice everything, even his daughter, to this passion."

"It would not be difficult for him to bend her to his will, for she loves him dearly. She is amiable, good, charming; I love her; but I pity her for being destined to a pecuniary marriage, and for not having energy to save herself from it. Her heart is cold, which will prevent her from being very unhappy."

It seemed to me that the mother and daughter had determined to discourage me.

I did not undertake to contradict Mlle. d'Astafort. I wished to discover what made her thus depreciate her friend and the friend of her mother. But the stupidest woman can defeat the shrewdest man at this game, and Mlle. Fanny stopped opportunely. I cannot therefore say whether she had a mental reservation for herself, and I had to content myself with the belief that these reflections, or admonitions, were one of those marks of misplaced interest which so badly conceal provincial curiosity.

After dinner they brought in the things which had

been found. Some fragments of red pottery; an amber bead, probably a piece of a necklace; a fragment of a vase with a raised rounded edge; a copper cup well preserved, the bottom widened and ornamented with a medallion representing the half-naked figure of a woman (the Goddess Hygeia) seated upon a chimera, and holding in her right hand a serpent.

With the aid of my "musty old books," as Mme. d'Astafort calls them, I should have determined the age of these relics, if she had given me the time; but she insisted upon returning to the parlor to play cards. In the provinces this is the occupation of the people who do nothing. Heavens! why cannot the indolent be content to lose their own time without forcing others to lose theirs? Marguerite played cards to amuse her guest; in reality she was not at all interested in what she did. She strove to lose in order to stop the sooner; but fortune, which seems to follow those who flee it, was eager that she should gain. Mlle. Fanny, irritated at losing, shuffled the cards so eagerly that her color rose. She is a handsome girl, with fair skin, dark hair, and the profile of a Juno. She does not please me. She is even displeasing with her stern eyes. I believe her very much in love with herself, and very little complaisant towards others.

11th June. I visited with M. Désormes the spot where they found the curiosities yesterday. It is a large field surrounded by a hedge and some old elm trees. Toward one end the ground rises abruptly, forming a sandy slope. On the summit is a bench of sandstone. The top of the slope is a large knoll covered with heath and broom.

This name, field of *la Motte*, or *la Morte*, as the old

people call it, seems to indicate the place of a tomb. Names should always be regarded as a revelation; they reproduce an event, a vanished monument or a legend. Many localities in this country have Celtic or Roman names: *l'oste* (*hortus* garden), *chastre* (*castrum*, camp), *les d'ordères* (druidères) *les brennes* (the trees), *la sépulture*, Dressais (the village of oaks), etc. The workmen found the vases fifty feet from the escarpment. The earth, thrown out, was full of ancient bricks, which are all looked upon as of the Roman period, and which are often of Gaulic manufacture. In my enthusiasm I begged M. Désormes to excavate here; but he replied:—

“Bah! if you must search every where where tiles are found, we shall excavate all my land. Moreover, I have no money to expend uselessly.”

His indifference repelled me. Standing in the full sunshine, with his hands crossed behind his back, a straw hat on his head, a cigar between his teeth, his eye following his workmen and each shovelful of earth which they threw up, his frowning brow and stubborn silence whilst standing in the sun reminded me of an American planter watching to lay the whip upon his lazy negroes. In my anxiety to find something, I set to work to search the bank; I struck my cane upon the ground; I turned over the stones, and was so absorbed that I did not notice a big black dog, hairy as a wolf, running at me. He growled, smelt me, wagged his tail, and ran towards his master, who was calling him: “Here, Noiraud! here, old fellow.”

I recognized the animal, which caused my upset on my arrival at St. Jean, and which Dolin pretended had played him a trick. As to father Carnat, I found him almost the same as I had left him ten years

before. He was regarded as a sorcerer, a revealer of secrets, a soothsayer, and interesting story-teller, as are all the shepherds. It was impossible to tell the exact age of this man—he might have been a hundred as well as sixty. His nose was short and purplish; his beard gray and innocent of a razor for at least a fortnight; his green eyes sparkled under his bushy brows; a few white hairs bristled over his oblong skull; his skin burned by the sun, and furrowed by intemperance, made him look like a mouldy medlar tree. Thin and gnarled like an old elm, he was dressed in a long white torn linen blouse, and shod with heavy wooden shoes, covered with pieces of sheepskin made into gaiters.

“Seeing you delving among all these stones,” said he, “makes me think you are searching for something. Good-morning, M. Mark! I suppose you do not remember me?”

“Yes, father Carnat, and also remember your dog.” Despite his ugliness I patted the brute upon the head. He recognized the caress by licking my hand, stretching himself, and giving vent to a formidable yawn; then, seized with sudden frolicsomeness, he scoured round and round the hillock, barking vociferously. As he passed, one of the laborers said maliciously to the shepherd:—

“Is your dog, like you, subjected to the falling sickness, or are these some tricks you have taught him?”

“Beastly idiot,” answered old Carnat, “you had better dig the grave where you will soon be, than to meddle with my dog.” Turning to me, he continued:

“He recognized you as a friend. Poor beast! he loves caressing as much as a woman. If he is a dog,

he has more sense than three-fourths of the Christians. Come here, Noiraud." The dog obeyed, and seated himself at his master's feet. I observed that both had the same sharp gray eyes.

"You have improved very much, M. Mark, and you have altogether become a handsome man: you somewhat resemble your late great-grandfather when he was young."

"You did not know my great-grandfather in his youth? You must be at least a hundred?"

"You must excuse me; I am even a little older than he was. I shall be one hundred and one in harvest time. Ah! my young man, I have seen many things. I knew your great-grandfather from the time I went to the fairs with the late Silvain Désormes, who, saving your presence, was my fellow swine-herd. Your uncle's father was not proud in those days. He never expected to see himself a great *bourgeois*, as he was afterwards, and if I had told him that one day he would be the owner of the land where he kept the pigs, saving your presence, he would not have believed me. Some go up, others down: and others again, like me, remain outwardly what they were born—swine-herds, or laborers; but did any come to me and say, 'Carnat, here are chateaux, and estates, and gold for you, on condition that you wear boots, fine clothes, and sleep on a feather bed in a golden chamber,' I should say I do not wish them. I prefer to be shepherd to Désormes' son, and with my dog Noiraud to wander over the heaths, sleep under the pale light of the stars when it pleases me, owing nothing to any one, and thinking of what I choose: Is it worth the trouble, I ask you, to bother your brains with books, more lying than women; to amass crowns which all

will quarrel for; to shatter one's mind and body—and to reach what? to die like one who has never done anything in his life. I—I await tranquilly 'the moment when the good God shall say to me: 'You have done enough here, you must go recommence elsewhere.'”

“Ah! you believe that you will live again?”

“Young man, I have never seen anything die; for, from what falls in the dust, there comes something living, and if nothing dies, why should I die? Sometimes I dream that I have lived upon the earth in past ages. There are things that I see for the first time, and of which I say to myself, I have seen that before already.”

I was struck forcibly with the strange words of the old man, and I remembered that when I was a child he had often entertained me with whimsical and mysterious ideas which I could not understand. What he told me then returned now to my mind, with strange force and clearness, and, who knows? perhaps I have taken up the conversation where we left it years ago. I aided him to recall it himself by saying to him that men who believed that they could remember anterior existences probably really did; and I added, using language fitted to his comprehension, that in a higher life elsewhere his eternal and progressing soul would undoubtedly remember better.

“Ha! that is well said,” cried the old shepherd, his eyes brightening with intelligence. “I see well you have forgotten nothing of what I taught you when you were young. Ah! M. Mark, we know what we know. The people here have more belief in me than in the rector, and if I wished, I could get rich; but I

prefer remaining quiet, and if sometimes I make a cure, it is to oblige and not from self-interest."

"Since you are a conjuror, upon which fact I must compliment you, you ought to know whence comes the name of this field *la Motte* or *la Morte*?"

"Certainly I know, and I am astonished that you, who are always reading, do not know the history. However, books do not tell everything."

"Tell me what you know."

"I will, but you must listen carefully."

"Certainly, go on."

"In the days long before the time of the English (who brought wars into the country), the people chose a chief to make a raid into a distant land, far, far beyond the mountains of Auvergne, which can be seen here on clear days. After many days of absence it was believed that they were lost; but they returned, the young chief at their head; and they had brought back so much gold that the springs of their wagons broke under the weight. It was also said that the chief had brought back with him a queen, or a princess—and that they were married. Amongst us such a woman had never been seen; she knew everything; she foretold the future; she read the stars; in fact, she was a witch, an enchantress. With magic words she soon built a chateau of fine gold, where she kept open house. It is also said that she built a large tomb for her husband, whom she had had killed by one of her lovers. She went every night to practise witchcraft on the body of her poor husband, and a band of black fiery-haired demons, her slaves, accompanied her. At length one day the head devil shut her up alive in her hole, built up the door, and piled on top so many loads of earth, that

it was like a large mountain, which could be seen for more than fifteen miles around. Later the spot was called *la Motte*, and since then, as it was all of good sand, the country people dug away the hill to make mortar. To-day there is, as you see, nothing left but a knoll with very little more sand. They say yet that every leap year the dead woman walks around her field, which is a sign of bad luck and sickness. It is a long time since she has made her appearance. Don't talk much about her; she wouldn't like it."

"But you don't believe in this story, Carnat?"

"I believe, and I don't believe. You had better say nothing about it;" and father Carnat, rising, ordered Noiraud to drive up the scattered sheep, and dog, shepherd, and flock disappeared in clouds of dust, gilded by the rays of the setting sun.

To what epoch does this legend belong? Who is this learned woman brought from so far? Who is this chief? Is not this expedition, whence the tribe came back with immense riches, the return of one of the Gaulish excursions from beyond the Alps? This queen or witch must be symbolic; and the tomb? Oh! if I were in M. Désormes' place, how I would rummage in this spot!

12th June. For five days Marguerite has withdrawn herself from me. She avoids all the occasions on which we might be alone. As soon as her father leaves the house, she goes to her apartment, or calls Nanniche to keep her company in the drawing-room. If our eyes meet, she blushes, and is embarrassed. I suspect her friend Fanny has spoken of me to her with as little charity as she spoke of Marguerite to me. I must hasten to leave, and yet I wish to stay; I hope every morning—and every evening I

despair. What is it I hope? Only that she will cease to be vexed with me.

13th June. I might hope, if Marguerite only loved me. To-day my uncle took me with him on his tour of inspection. He showed me with pride his woods, field, pasturages, his clearings; what do I know of them? The walk was seasoned with theories on agriculture and farm life. We had walked some six miles, sometimes over ploughed land, sometimes along the hedges; sometimes we stopped to examine the state of the crops, sometimes the trespass of a neighbor, or the neglect of a keeper. My uncle has a passion for button-holing, and talking to you in his tracks, which is much more tiresome than to walk along. I was fatigued physically and mentally, and I thought I should go to sleep standing, when the conversation took a turn that interested me more than the drainage, the price of cereals, or new fertilizers.

"It is, as you see," said my uncle, "a noble property, and Margot will be, the day she is married, the best dowered girl in the department; for I think of giving her by deed a portion of the property we have visited."

He recapitulated with satisfaction the names of the farms, woods, and fields to constitute my cousin's dowry. Heretofore I had not listened with an attention worthy of the subject, for I never thought or cared for Marguerite's fortune—nor indeed for any other. But suddenly, either intentionally, or as if struck by a new idea, M. Désormes exclaimed, seizing me by the button-hole for the fiftieth time—"and you, have you never had any idea of marrying?"

As I had but one thought in my head, I believe and still believe that he wished to speak to me of Margue-

rite—of Marguerite, alas! to whom I am hateful.

"Well," he continued, "you make me no answer."

"Every one thinks more or less of marriage, uncle; but my means are too slender."

"That is so; but if you should find a good match?"

"Oh! I would never marry even a millionaire without loving her and being beloved."

"Bah! one is always loved, if one is not a monster; and you are not ill-looking; a little weakly, perhaps; but that will pass away. If I found you a good match!—have you confidence in me? You do not mind living in the provinces?"

"No, indeed, on the contrary; but I will never marry any one that I do not know."

"Doubtless you must have time to become a little acquainted; not too much, however. I saw very little of your aunt before our marriage, and I was as diffident as you. I hope you will not think of leaving us till your accounts are settled."

"But, uncle, I have much work for M. Weisberg, and fear to abuse his kindness."

"What folly! I will not bother myself with you, and will go and come as if you were not here. You must stay; do not absorb yourself too much in your books; be more amiable, not so careless, and in fact there is no need to seek far for a match, if you have eyes."

In short my uncle really made overtures to me; but I do not know what stupid bashfulness possessed me. As he advanced, I made objections, till he left me abruptly and sprang into the bushes from whence I had heard blows of a hatchet.

"Here is somebody," he cried, "who thought me deaf; I will teach him how to cut fagots."

He advanced boldly into the woods, where I followed, remaining at his command a little in the background, and concealed by the bushes. On seeing the master, the thief, caught in the act, remained immovable. I recognized the workman who, the evening before, had apostrophized father Carnat, and whom the latter had called a "beastly idiot."

"How, Fraudy," said my uncle advancing, "is it you who steal my wood? Stop, rascal."

"Do not come near me," replied Fraudy, grasping the handle of his hatchet in his horny hand. "Do not come near me, M. Désormes! forget that you found me here; do not have me arrested, or, as sure as we two are alone here, you shall pay me more than it is worth."

"You steal from me and then threaten me. I see you are drunk; go! clear out from here!"

"I shall go or stay as I please."

"This is the way you take me! we shall see," said M. Désormes, springing towards him.

Fraudy raised his hatchet over my uncle's head; but I was ready. I tripped him up, and despite his struggles held him down.

"Pardon, sir," he cried; "I am the unhappy father of a family. It is true that I sometimes come here to cut a few fagots; but, indeed, I would have paid M. Désormes for them."

"You lie! you are a thief and assassin," exclaimed my uncle; "you are not drunk, and shall have a taste of prison."

I asked if the man was really unfortunate.

"Nonsense!" replied my uncle; "if you listen to them, you will believe that they are all starving."

Slipping five francs into the man's hand, I told him to go.

He rose and stared at me with astonishment; put on his wooden shoes, which had dropped off in the struggle, and turned to pick up his hatchet; but M. Désormes clapped his foot upon it, saying—

“I will keep this as proof; you shall hear from me.”

Fraudy hurried off without another word.

“You don't intend to prosecute him, uncle?”

“Oh no! To make complaint and institute suit would bother me. I have my hay to cut. I only threatened in order to frighten him. If it had not been for you, he might have given me an ugly blow. These peasants have been bold since the republic, thanks to the new ideas with which their heads have been crammed, and which they do not understand. However, my boy, you were just in time; you gave me good help. I did not think your fist so strong. In dealing with these peasants it is not amiss to have a strong arm.”

This evening M. Désormes related his adventures with Fraudy to his daughter and Dr. Thibaut, who dined with us. Afterwards the two talked together. I read in the library, and Marguerite sauntered in the garden, whither I dared not follow her. The kind of offer which my uncle had made caused me to feel her indifference still more acutely. The doctor gone, M. Désormes sought me.

“What are you doing alone, in place of walking with your cousin? One would say you avoided her. Is the little Désormes not clever enough for you?”

His rough raillery pained me. “Marguerite treats me coldly, uncle.”

"Coldly! very coldly indeed! I hope, at her age, that she's not in love with you. I don't want her to marry too young, and I am glad she does not dream of it; but you are no child. You know what is due a young girl, especially a relative. I spoke to you about yourself on the heath. I told you that, as you loved the country, a day would come—I say nothing; but make yourself worthy of my kindness—we shall see what we can do for you."

I embraced him, saying—"But Marguerite does not love me!"

"I hope not! Are you crazy? If I thought she would love a person on fifteen days' acquaintance, I should send her off to school. But she is a quiet and reasonable girl, who will never love without my permission."

Marguerite had retired to her room without my seeing her. She did not speak to me at dinner, not even to say a word in relation to the aid given her father. Fanny is right; she is cold, and will never know what it is to love.

15th June. Yesterday we dined and spent the evening at Mme. d'Astafort's, whom I would really believe to be taken with me, if it were not for her fifty odd years—she looks at me so intently.

A party is not pleasant in a little room heated to twenty-five degrees Centigrade. There was a strange mixture of aristocracy, bourgeoisie, and native democracy.

First, there was Count *de* Mauvezin, a handsome blonde, rosy as a doll; cravated, gloved, and polished to the last degree; the medal of fashion for the provinces; a doggy and horseyman, who ought to have been born his own groom. The lady of the house

introduced us; but we did not fall into conversation. I believe there was some antipathy between us; at least I can answer for myself on that point.

I was also introduced to M. Michel, a civil engineer, who devotes himself to geology. He is a large man, with the shoulders of a bull, brusque in manner, and common in look, but, nevertheless, good-natured. M. *de la Chapelaud*, a little wizened-up sprig of nobility, who, physically and morally, is in perfect contrast with his friend Raoul *de Vinceaux*, rosy and stout, lively and good-natured, and a jolly companion. Dr. Thibaut I already knew. Boe, the poet of the place, was the son of the housekeeper of Urban Valery, my ancestor. He was at least forty; small, with large head, and thick hair, big black moustache and heavy pointed beard, pale face, small deep-set eyes, large nose, thick neck, crooked narrow shoulders, and short legs, which terminated in a pair of large feet, encased in new shining boots. Such is Boe. At the end of three sentences he said something which Raoul *de Vinceaux* had the misfortune to contradict. It was then that with disdainful lip, and an evident tone of superiority, he set himself to building and destroying empires, cutting and slashing the vitals of constitutions, and saving the country at the close of every sentence.

M. *de Vinceaux*, under the pretence of gaining information upon the moral situation of France, drew him on to make himself superlatively ridiculous, and that with such an air of good faith that no one could be deceived but the poet. After having made him thoroughly absurd, he declared himself convinced, admired his platitudes, and left him to his triumphs and folly. I did not trouble myself more

about him. On a sign from Mlle. Fanny, I joined her, and I was the only gentleman besides *de Mauvezin* who had dared to overstep the barricade of ladies. It is strange to see the gentlemen in black coats, standing in groups, and not speaking to the ladies, ranged in a circle and looking solemnly at each other. One would think that it was the preliminary to a funeral. The hostess, finding the party dull, wished to arouse us by a brilliant stroke. She begged the poet to recite some verses. Boe, after many coquetries, at length consented.

"Give us *L'Amour*," cried three or four old ladies. Every one became silent. The poet, throwing back his ferocious mane, and raising his stiff moustache, recited with emphasis a long rhymed doggerel which he called "*Cupid and his Mother*."

An ill-suppressed yawn, and a hat falling on the floor, directed all eyes to M. de Vinceaux, who hastened to cry—"Magnificent!"

There was some applause, followed immediately by the rattling of cups and saucers, the rustle of dresses, and the movement of chairs. The bustle awakened my uncle, who had fallen asleep at the sixth verse, and who called out—"What o'clock is it?"

Raoul de Vinceaux beckoned to me to join him, and, profiting by the general movement, we slipped off to smoke a cigar in the open air. He was in a most amusing state of irritation.

"This is a pretty trap to be caught in," said he. "Boe's verses have upon me the effect of a paving-stone for dessert. I should have laughed heartily if I had not been overcome with sadness. I had heard so little of the verses that I could not judge whether they were as bad as they were tiresome. Marguerite

had not been absent from my thoughts, and I was as amazed at her, as Raoul at the poet. She was beautifully dressed, and looking lovelier than ever. M. de Mauvezin had spoken to her several times; but she did not notice my antipathy towards him. I wished her to share or at least to feign to share it.

The sound of the piano recalled us to the ball-room. I immediately asked Marguerite to dance; she refused coldly by saying that she was engaged to dance with M. de Mauvezin. I had not the trouble of asking Mlle. d'Astafort; her large eyes challenged me. Less boisterous than her mother, she is far more malicious, and instructed me in all the little tittle tattle of the neighborhood. I laughed till she called my attention to the fact that my cousin was dancing a second time with M. de Mauvezin.

"What a pity," she added, "that she is so young! Those two blondes would make such a handsome couple. I must put it into Marguerite's head to be a countess; her title will hide her low origin on the paternal side. However, for the granddaughter of a swine-herd, she has quite a distinguished air. I suppose you will ask her to dance presently. How cold your hands are, and how fierce you look! Have I said anything to anger you? Ah! pardon; I forgot that Marguerite was a Valéry on the mother's side."

I replied carelessly: "I was wounded at seeing Marguerite listening to that silly doll they call Mauvezin." I understand perfectly that she does not care for me, and, as if she ought to partake my passion, I mentally reproach her with being a child, without a soul, without discernment, without character—such indeed as Fanny had described her. I did not again seek to dance with her; Fanny engrossed

me: I flirted with her as if expecting to wound Marguerite. Heavens, how I suffered! M. de Mauvezin accidentally touched me with his elbow; he excused himself. I did not answer him; I wished to mortify him. What pleasure it would have given me to fight with him! At twelve there was a waltz. In passing me Mlle. Désormes looked at me earnestly. I thought I read anger in her eyes. I wished to see it; I persuaded myself that I did see it. How much more I preferred her anger to her indifference! I madly resolved to brave her to the end. I was glad to wound her self-love; I wished her to feel some of the torments which she had inflicted on me. I took Fanny round the waist, and kept waltzing past my cousin. She was not waltzing, and every time Mlle. d'Astafort's dress touched her she drew her own aside, with a slight movement, which I would like to attribute to anger, but which was, perhaps, only a coquetish instinct to show de Mauvezin her pretty little foot. The waltz over, she arose to leave.

"How! you are going?" cried Mme. d'Astafort in her rough familiar tones. "They are going to dance the *bourée*. See, little kitten! it is only half past twelve."

Marguerite answered that she was tired, and left the room with her father. I started to follow, but Mlle. d'Astafort entreated me to wait till the ball should be over.

"One of the gentlemen will take you home—M. de Mauvezin, for example, who lives at Chizé; or rather M. de Vinceaux; he lives at the chateau of Grand Plessis, and must pass St. Jean." I accepted the offer which Raoul pressed upon me, and remained.

I heard the wheels of the carriage revolve which

carried away Marguerite and my heart together; for, when she left, I was desolate. As if my vengeance could have caused her to suffer! The ladies recommenced dancing, but they all seemed insipid to me.

"That Désormes is a real mar pleasure," exclaimed Mme. d'Astafort, returning to the room; "who ever heard of such an early bird! To carry off Margot at midnight! And the little goose has no will of her own! Come, come, a polka!"

Taking advantage of a momentary confusion, I slipped off, after informing M. de Vinceaux that I should go afoot.

"Go on," he replied; "I will harness my horse and follow you, for if we listen to these young ladies we shall dance till eight in the morning." A quarter of an hour after he rejoined me, and we drove along quietly in his tilbury by the light of the moon.

"Do you know that I owe you something?" he exclaimed.

"For what?"

"For having come and stolen the hearts of our young ladies. You need not look astonished; I noticed how Mlle. Fanny cast her eyes upon you."

"Good! where the devil did you learn it?"

"In her eyes brightening with pleasure; in her flushed cheek; in her inattention to all but you; in all her little feminine artifices to dance with you—ever you."

"I did not observe it."

"Then you are blind; but there were others who did not lose sight of you for one moment, and who are still discontented."

"You, perhaps?"

"I! oh no; I am not in love with Mlle. d'Astafort;

but my friend Adalbert de Mauvezin, who, to make her jealous, flirted a little with Mlle. Désormes; and Boe, who is always seeking in the fields of poetry madrigals in which to address Mlle. Fanny, whom he has named the nymph of the forest, for do you know that your lovely victim likewise commits verses?"

"Oh! then, according to you, I have turned the head of a blue-stockings!"

"No! she is a full-fledged rhymers. Her adorers were on thorns all the evening, and if I could have only called your attention to them, I should not have had to laugh alone; but you were like a star surrounded with satellites in petticoats, and I could not approach you. You only neglected the poor little Désormes, who is very pretty, and whom I would not give for ten Fannies. Were I you, I should pay my addresses to her in preference to Mlle. d'Astafort; but every man to his taste! perhaps you admire brunettes only?"

To avert all suspicion, I answered coolly that I preferred the rosy beauties.

He set me down at the end of the avenue as day broke. On approaching the house I saw a light in Marguerite's room—could she be ill?

The door opening upon the green was closed, and as I turned to reach the back door, my cousin's window opened; I saw a small hand, perhaps hers, perhaps Nanniche's, throw out the key of the hall-door. This thoughtful attention dispelled all my bitterness. I did not flatter myself that she was watching for me, but that she had made her waiting-maid do so. It was a kindness which I ill merited.

Yes! I have acted badly; anger is an evil counsellor, and I have bitterly repented. All the little

incidents of the evening returned upon me with overwhelming force. I could not close my eyes. Love! I do not know how to love! I have lived for myself, and I have worked to render myself strong, and when I feel tenderly I am frightened. No! no! I do not know how to love, and yet I love.

Fanny to Marguerite:—

June 15th.

My little Margot: You were undecipherable last evening; I have nothing so important as to come and ask you for the key word of the enigma. First, you were sulky with me, and wherefore? I do not know. Was it because your cousin danced and talked so long with me? But you seemed to forget him completely, and to accept with pleasure the attentions of M. de Mauvezin. I was surprised. I believed that you had only eyes for Mark, at least so you told me, and last night I was convinced that you were not so much taken with him after all.

You see, my pretty inconstant, you must choose between your savant, and the young, brilliant, and rich Count de Mauvezin. Ah! I understand that it would be tempting to become a countess when one is a simple *bourgeoise*. There will, doubtless, be difficulties on the side of the marchioness, the young man's mother, but cannot love overcome mountains? Then your father, who will be delighted with such an alliance, will display all his wealth to dazzle the old lady's eyes. Reflect upon what I say, dear Margot! I renounced M. Mark for you; there was no merit in it, for I did not love him; but my mother is ignorant of the concession, and if you give him up, I shall think twice before causing mamma a real disappointment.

Decide then; I await from my queen permission to look at the one she disdains. Now don't pout at me any more; it pains me. I am your best friend, and ever willing to sacrifice my happiness to yours.

FANNY.

MARK'S JOURNAL.

16th June. My uncle teased me about Fanny. "I hope," said he, in malicious tones, "you made her dance enough for a fortnight. The poor girl must be worn out. You amused yourself well, as we could not tear you from her. At what hour did you get home?"

"At three in the morning," answered Marguerite.

"Ah! then you did not sleep?"

"No," she replied, rising abruptly and leaving the room without looking at me.

Not only does she no longer feel friendship for me, but she despises me. I did all that I could last evening to bring it about, and I have only myself to blame. I went into the park, near the little lake, and seated myself under the hanging boughs of an old willow. I melted to tears, and in my despair I had a mad wish to drown myself. I was a prey to the blackest thoughts. It seemed that I had commenced life wrong, and that it would be wiser to go no further into the unknown future. My face buried in the grass, I did not hear Marguerite approach.

"Why do you weep?" said she, placing her hand upon my shoulder.

Ashamed at being thus surprised, I dared not look up.

"Speak! What grieves you so deeply?"

"You."

"I? how can I grieve you?"

"You will not understand that I love you."

"I do not believe it. If you loved me you would not have acted as you did yesterday. It is Fanny that you love."

"Marguerite, you know that I do not love, have never loved other than you. At first, when you were a little child, I cherished you for your sweetness, your pretty face; later, for the uprightness and frankness of your nature, the trusting sincerity of your heart. You loved Mark in those days; you told your mother that he should be your husband. She answered, smiling, 'I give my consent.' I have always religiously preserved this remembrance; and when I saw you a short time ago so womanly, so beautiful, so good, my love overcame my reason. I recalled our projected union, which, had your mother lived, would have been realized. I saw in you my affianced, my wife."

"Was your conduct yesterday that of an affianced?"

"No! I acted as a jealous man; I wished to revenge myself upon you; I was so enraged that I could have killed Mauvezin, and would have liked to make you suffer as much as I did; I only succeeded in wounding your self-love, that is all."

"Then I have no love but self-love! You judge me thus, yet pretend to love me."

"Yes! Even in spite of my own will, in spite of your anger, my love is beyond control: I only think of you—yesterday, to-day—always. What I say may perhaps anger you; what matters it! You must know what I have suffered—what I suffer—my firmness is gone. I can no longer support the position you have

placed me in. I love you without limit, without thinking of the past, or of the future. You cannot prevent that, and I tell you so frankly, though you may hate me the more for it."

"Mark! I do not hate you. I have friendship—too much friendship for you. If I do not love you as you wish, that is no reason that I am heartless. Love is not commanded, it is gained; deserve mine!"

"Yes! Marguerite, yes! I do not deserve it. I have acted madly, spoken cruelly. I wished to console, and have wounded you. I am an unfortunate man, alone in the world, struggling against fate. I had thought to find in you a friend, to whom I was already bound body and soul; but I am abrupt, impetuous, distrustful; I suffered too young, and friendship has too soon deserted me. Tell me what I ought to do! Speak, Marguerite!"

"You must believe in me, and you must not torment yourself—nor me."

"Then you will love me, will you not?"

Marguerite was seated at my side. In my passion I had thrown myself at her feet and seized her hands. Night came on; the walk was in shadow. "Answer, Marguerite; encourage me; give me one glimmer of hope; you will love me, will you not?"

"Yes!" she whispered, and putting her arms around my neck she pressed a kiss upon my forehead; then, ashamed of the act, she burst into tears.

"Why do you weep, Marguerite? are you afraid of me? Are you ashamed of your love?"

"I do not wish you to marry Fanny," replied she, impetuously.

"Fanny! I do not understand you; I have never dreamed of her."

"But her mother, and herself think of it—and my father—"

"Is opposed to it, is he not?"

"It is my turn not to understand," said Marguerite, opening her large eyes and seeking to read my meaning. I was embarrassed for an answer. My uncle had certainly authorized me to love his daughter, but not to declare it to her. He thought her too young to marry; I felt myself imprudent in hurrying on the time fixed for my happiness by betraying the confidence he had reposed in me. As I hesitated to speak, Marguerite continued: "I assure you my father has arranged your marriage with Fanny; this is why I have avoided you since I felt that I loved you, but now I have no further scruple. Fanny does not love you; she wrote me so this morning; and I believe her more ambitious than loving; she is thinking of another; nevertheless, I am not sure of this, and, besides, it is her secret; but as for us, Mark! I fear it is impossible."

"For us to marry? You believe so?"

"Yes, I am sure of it; my father loves money, he will find you too poor for me! Ah! Mark, what a misfortune to be rich!"

She commenced to weep so bitterly that I had no longer courage to remain silent, and, besides, she did not seem to me to do justice to the family feeling which has such weight and strength in M. Désormes' heart.

"No, dear Marguerite," I said to her, "your father is better than you think. He, perhaps, wished me to marry Fanny, who even is too wealthy for me; but without doubt Mlle. d'Astafort has told him that she does not care for me; and he, good uncle, thought at

once to keep me for himself. Yes! it is Marguerite; he told me so almost as plainly as I now tell you; only it is yet a secret. He thinks you are too young, and perhaps he may think that I am too young likewise. He wishes me to stay here. He wishes to know me; to prove me; to teach me farming. Alas! my tastes are not that way! But what could I not do to gain you and show my gratitude?"

Marguerite, at first, was less joyful than surprised, and I had much trouble in persuading her that I had not mistaken her father's intentions. At last she yielded to the evidence, and, hand clasped in hand, we swore eternal love. Dear innocent child, I had not even embraced her! My uncle would have forgiven me for having spoken too soon on seeing how I respected and venerated her.

17th June. Rain again! I hate rain, but now I love and should bless it, if it fell in torrents all day. I think no more of ethnological researches, of antique coins. I am indifferent to all.

I am happy, my beloved Marguerite! I believe in you; you love me. I fear I shall become mad!

18th June. Last night I had a dream *à propos* to the legend of *la Morte*. There was nothing very strange in the dream if it were not for its coincidence with a similar one of the old shepherd Carnat's.

If I were superstitious I should see in it a bad augury. I had already had much trouble to get to sleep, so much were my nerves excited by the emotions of these last days. When my ideas took form, I was lying down, held by an invincible force, on a tomb in the midst of a sepulchral chamber, which I know was under the sandy slope in the field of *la Morte*. The corpse of a woman, whom I strove in vain to recognize, lay beside me, and I felt that it was her cold em-

brace that prevented me from rising. Through the open door I saw Marguerite, dressed in white, crowned with leaves, holding a branch of mistletoe in her hand, come from an oak wood and advance slowly toward me; father Carnat and his black dog followed her.

In my dream I had long ceased to live, and as Marguerite approached, I felt the arms of this inanimate body at my side become moist and flexible. When Marguerite was before us, the dead one arose, and, descending from the tomb, placed herself between me and my affianced.

"Go!" she said, "do not wake him from his long sleep; he is nothingness like me. Leave him! it is my husband! go!" Marguerite, who did not seem to understand her, walked resolutely toward her, and with the branch of mistletoe struck her in the face. The dead one, overcome by I know not what supernatural force, seemed to sink into herself, and disappeared with a shrill cry which I believe I had really heard. I sprang from my tomb, which was nothing but my bed, and I awoke in the middle of my chamber.

That morning I was walking, and met father Carnat. His manner of talking and thinking interests me, especially when he touches on the supernatural, to which topic I lead him as often as possible. He had already spoken to me of the superstitions and legends with which I was acquainted, and when I recalled to his remembrance the legend of *la Morte*, "Oh! stop!" he cried; "you made me dream that night, at day-break, I saw the ghost."

"You saw?"

"Yes, sir! in a dream; it was a strange dream; listen to it."

I listened carefully, and I have not yet recovered from my surprise.

"I was," said he, "herding my cattle in the wood of Poquelés when the young lady of St. Jean, with the face of an angel, with hair glittering like sunbeams, and dressed in white, came from the wood.

"'Father Carnat,' said she, 'you must come and help me to resuscitate my lover.' You will excuse me, M. Mark, but she spoke so. I left my animals under the charge of my dog, and followed her. You were lying upon a sort of tomb in a vaulted chamber, alongside of the ghost, who held you tightly embraced in her arms. If you had not been already dead, she would have stifled you. In my dream, I knew words that could bring the dead to life, and Mlle. Marguerite held a bough in her hand. I do not remember what we two said, but it must have been an incantation. Suddenly the ghost arose screeching like an owl, and running round the tomb. She wished to prevent our approaching you; but the daughter of St. Jean silenced her, by striking her on the face with her magic branch. The ghost fled through the open door towards Dressais; she fled so quickly that the air rustled around her. Your loving friend Marguerite (she was that in my dream) took you by the hand and led you from the tomb. I do not know how, but I found myself Mayor of the Commune, and I was on the point of marrying you, before more than six thousand persons. Suddenly you and Mlle. Marguerite disappeared from before me. The crowd spread over the heath. I found myself alone in a boundless field of sand; It was hot; I had lost my sheep and my dog. Ah! I awoke in great trouble. Now, does

not all this imply that you are going to marry M. Désormes' daughter?"

I took care not to give the old shepherd an inkling of my affairs, but I told him that, being a sorcerer, he ought to know and be able to tell me my future.

"There are times," replied he, "when I could tell it to you clearly. It is when the ecstasy is upon me; but it shortens my life. Just now I know nothing; but I think that the ghost will do you an injury."

"If I have nothing but chimerical beings to fear, I am certain of a happy termination of my love, as Marguerite loves me."

We conversed again this evening. She is doubtful of the future, but I reassured her. She has told me a hundred times that she has never loved, and never will love, any one but me. Heré we are like the lovers in a romance, with mystery to crown our beautiful poem; for we must hide from good M. Désormes. How happy we shall be some day to obey him! Some day! provided he does not delay it too long.

The impatience to live quickly already devours me, and yet the present is so beautiful. But man has no true idea of actual things! By study he buries himself in the past; by desire he throws himself too far into the future.

Chassepain, Notary, to M. Désormes:—

ARDENTES, June 19, 1850.

SIR AND DEAR CLIENT: I wish to bring to you in person your accounts as guardian, which are now in order, and to profit by the visit to communicate to you an idea which has occurred to me; but I have not had the time. I write you on the subject that you may have leisure to think over it before we meet.

The day before yesterday I called to see the Marchioness de Mauvezin, of whose business I have charge. She asked me a thousand questions about you, about your estate, your fortune, your intentions with regard to your daughter: her age, manners, and tastes. The marchioness tried to talk carelessly, and I humored her. This, however, need not prevent us from discussing her. Her fortune is good: the estate of Chizé, valued at three hundred thousand francs, touches the forest of Bommiers. The marquis, who lives at Paris, has contracted some debts, which, according to the marchioness, are of no great importance. Their only son, Count Adalbert de Mauvezin, will have for a dower one hundred and fifty thousand francs. At the death of his father, who, between us, will not live long, he will take the title of marquis.

You may believe that I did not depreciate your fortune. In short, from what has been said, you may be sure that, one day, the marchioness will ask the hand of your daughter for her son. It seems that the count met Mlle. Marguerite at Mme. d'Astafort's, and was struck with her beauty. As you may have observed, he is a handsome man of some twenty-five years, and does not think it beneath him to interest himself in agriculture. I know that your daughter is still very young, and that there is no hurry to marry her; but, if I am not mistaken, and the little god Cupid darts an arrow, the prejudices of birth will be thrown aside. The barrier of rank may be surmounted, and your charming daughter become the Marchioness de Mauvezin. You may thus unite the largest fortune in Berri to one of the most illustrious names. Think of it, and we will discuss it. Accept the assurance of my sincere friendship.

CHASSEPAIN.

Désormes to M. Chassepain :—

ST. JEAN, June 20, 1850.

DEAR FRIEND: What you wrote took me by surprise, and I must have time to think a little. As you say, there is no hurry, and my daughter will not want for offers. I have very little acquaintance with M. Adalbert de Mauvezin. He is a handsome man, and that is all I know about him. I have called on the marchioness but once, and I confess that her manners did not charm me. I have little taste for great people, and I have never aspired to a high alliance for my daughter. If my father were living, he would laugh heartily to see his grand-daughter a marchioness. I do not say that she is not quite as well worth it as another. She is as well educated as a nobleman's daughter, and there is no one more elegant; but my wishes have been very moderate. Lately I have been thinking of marrying her to one of my family, a companion of her childhood, and who is no fool. You will guess of whom I speak; it is useless to name him. At first I thought of offering him as son-in-law to Mme. d'Astafort, but he used his hand so well for me, in a difficulty I had the other day, that it had an effect upon me, and I therefore sounded his ideas, but adroitly enough, you may believe, not to give him too much confidence. I saw that he was not opposed to it, and there we are. Your proposal has made me reflect, and I am glad I did not speak more positively to him, for, after all, it is Margot's happiness that is the most important, and if M. de Mauvezin pleases her I would not refuse him. Let us hurry nothing. One never repents of waiting. Margot has never yet thought of marriage. Give the marchioness to understand that I am in no hurry to settle my daughter,

and if she insists my indifference in replying to her will be so much the better. You know the nobility; they think they honor us, and, if we show any eagerness for their alliance, they are extremely exacting. I would like you to find out the amount of the marquis's debts.

Accept my thanks and affectionate regards.

DÉSORMES.

P. S. I will come to see you to-morrow, when we will settle our accounts with my nephew.

Mark Valery to Cadanet:—

June 21, 1850.

DEAR FRIEND: I have had an absurd scene with my uncle, and to-morrow morning I return to Paris. We are mutually irritated. I do not very well know for what, but the truth is I can stay here no longer.

You know he invited me hither that he might arrange his accounts, as guardian, with me. For twenty days I have been waiting for M. Chassepain, his notary, to put them in order. During these twenty days —for me an eternity—I have fallen in love with my cousin. I love her, or rather I loved her already, but I will speak of that later; at present I have not the strength to recall all the happiness that I have lost.

This morning I again went to the notary's with M. Désormes, and the accounts were ready. M. Chassepain explained to me very clearly the position of my affairs—my father's careless management, and the pains my uncle had taken to save a hundred thousand francs from the general wreck. I did not understand much, except that I had to return him, for educational expenses, twenty thousand francs. It

seemed to me insulting towards my guardian to verify the correctness of his accounts. I was not sorry that I owed nothing to any one. He had forced me to acquire an education, and I would have been extremely ungrateful not to thank him for it. I had never possessed so much money before, and I was already considering how to invest my wealth, when the notary helped me out of my embarrassment. He told me that my father had left debts amounting to sixty-five thousand francs, and asked if I intended to pay them. I was ignorant of the existence of these debts, but I hastened to count out to him the sum he had named, and he gave me in exchange a receipt. As I tore it up before him I observed the notary jog my uncle's elbow, with a mysterious air. M. Désormes asked me to go and tell Dolin to harness the horse, while he spoke a few words to the notary. Dolin had not unharnessed, and, as my uncle did not come, I started and walked to St. Jean's, arriving there before he did.

After dinner, before my cousin, he commenced giving me his opinion in a jocular manner.

"You have been rather lightened, it appears to me," said he. "The weight of your fortune will not burst your pocket. You know how to make the crowns fly. The deuce! you part with eighty-five thousand francs as I swallow a glass of wine. You think that a hundred thousand francs sprout like grass. You went at it tooth and nail. You paid your father's debts without asking advice of any one, and without assuring yourself that the sixty-five thousand francs had not been extorted by sharpers."

I replied that I had confidence, and had not thought of consulting, on which he retorted:—

"It was not my place to say anything before the notary, but your father acted like a madman."

"The only question, uncle, is—did he or did he not owe the money?"

"He owed it, but to sharpers, I tell you."

"That does not matter; my duty is to sacrifice everything to protect his memory."

"Bah! his memory. Who is bothering about that?"

"I, M. Désormes."

"Ah! yes," he cried, raising his voice, "these are fine sentiments. You see! you will never know the value of money. You are possessed with the new-fangled notions. Cultivate communism, my boy; go drink water and eat cold veal with your brethren; it will fill your belly." And M. Désormes shrugged his shoulders pityingly.

Marguerite tried to soothe her father.

"Go! play with your dolls," he said to her.

"What ails you to-day, uncle?" I asked. "You speak as speaks no duke of twenty-six quarterings."

"I am not noble, and I boast of it. I am a son of labor—I am a citizen, but I have worked as my father did, and we all know the value of money. Now money is everything, despite all your liberty and fraternity."

"Ah!" I replied with some excitement, "you would crush out liberty."

"Yes! I wish liberty without license. But that is not all! Do you think it is pleasant for me to see a youth of my family, who might enjoy easy competence, and marry well, with only fifteen thousand francs, and that by his own folly! It was grand, but idiotic! If you think Mlle. d'Astafort will have any-

thing to do with you now, you are very much mistaken."

I thought I had misunderstood him, and I made him repeat Mlle. d'Astafort's name.

"Then," I remarked, "it was Mlle. Fanny that—"

"That what? Without doubt; but you must think no more of it."

Glancing at Marguerite, I saw big tears rolling down her cheek.

"Uncle! I thought I understood from what you told me that—"

"What did I tell you?" exclaimed he, angrily. "I said nothing; and if I did say something, you misunderstood me. You are a fool—there!"

His rude coarseness repelled me, and I responded sharply, "I do not know what has come over you to-night; you have already said too much to me; I can bear no more; I have had enough, uncle."

"You have had enough? I also. Good-night! I shall detain you no longer."

"It is well; I shall start at once."

"Do you think I will disturb Dolin to drive you at this hour? You will wait for morning."

Marguerite, crying, arose and said, "Mark, you were wrong to take my father thus; and you, father, ought not to blame my cousin for so noble an action, and one which does him so much honor."

"Ah! you, also; you are going to display contempt for money? Go and amuse yourself with your fripperies, and you will please me."

I felt that I should again lose my patience. Pressing Marguerite's hand passionately, and unable to speak, I left the room.

Three hours have passed since these events. I can-

not say whether anger or grief prevails over me. I wish to weep; I cannot. My trunk is ready; I await daybreak with impatience. I could not have imagined only that M. Désormes had intentions in regard to me. I was not dreaming! I could not have misunderstood him! And yet to-day he pretends to have said nothing. I do not comprehend! My brain is confused! Adieu, dear Cadanet. Take care of yourself; avoid love, and think of your friend, who carries death in his heart.

MARK.

P. S. I open my letter to tell you that toward two o'clock I heard Nanniche's stealthy step in the hall, and a note slipping under my door. It is from Marguerite, who sends me a few words of consolation and hope. She exhorts me to have courage; not a word of reproach for having misunderstood her father. She felt that if I was deceived, my mistake had been made in good faith. I retain at least her esteem; without that, I should not have strength to support the overthrow of my hopes. Sympathize with me, but rest assured I shall not act with weakness.

Mme. d'Astafort to M. Désormes:—

DRESSAIS, June 22, 1850.

DEAR NEIGHBOR: You will be the same sleepy-head all your life. You do not know how to make up your mind to anything, which is a great pity. This must come to an end. You must speak to M. Mark. Though Fanny tries to dissimulate with me, I can see that she is deeply smitten. As to him, he paid her sufficient attention at the ball to show his awakening love, and I believe our children understand each other perfectly. Therefore act without further delay, and

answer at once. You ought to feel some little of the impatience with which you reproach me. Your indecision has already rendered me sufficiently unhappy. You know how anxious I am to have Fanny married as soon as possible; she is so headstrong as often to cause me great anxiety. Yours,

BLANCHE D'ASTAFORT,
BORN TOURTIAUX.

M. Désormes to Mme. d'Astafort:—

ST. JEAN, June 23, 1850.

DEAR MADAM: We must delay, for at least a while, the realization of our project. My nephew left the day before yesterday for Paris, whither the Baron Weisberg summoned him for some important work. I ought not to conceal from you the state of Mark's fortune. After paying his own and his father's debts, and all accounts, he has but fifteen thousand francs, which will be no longer a temptation to you, I suppose. Thank me now for not having spoken to him in relation to Fanny, in place of reproaching me with being a laggard. Laggardliness is sometimes prudence. I hope Fanny will soon be consoled for the loss of my addle-pated nephew. We will find her a fine husband, unless she is too much in love with him; in which case I can write to the young man one of these days, though I do not believe either of you so foolish. Your affectionate and devoted

JULIAN DÉSORMES.

Mark Valery to Cadanet:—

PARIS, June 30, 1850.

DEAR FRIEND: I have been in Paris for eight days. I am like a body bereft of soul. I cannot settle myself

to work. I have no taste for anything; everything and everybody is insupportable. I feel like quarrelling with every one. I wish to flee from here—far from myself—and it is to you that I write. You will give me courage. I have prayed Baron Weisberg to release me. I wish to join you in Africa. I will enlist in the spahis. Marguerite will forget me. I shall try to think no more. It will be best thus. Should I have the good luck to arrive on the eve of an expedition, arrange so that I may join it. I have an inward fever, which can only be subdued by reckless sabrestrokes, and he who kills me will render me a real service. I shall be at Constantine by the 10th of July at latest.

MARK.

PART II.

CADANET'S RECITAL.

EARLY in July, Mark Valery joined me at Constantine. He entered the service in Paris, fearing that I might endeavor to persuade him to change his determination. There was nothing left but to assign him to a position in my squadron. I took good care that for the first few days, at least, his duties should be light. I found the poor boy in a most dreadful state of mental depression, and had the utmost difficulty to restore the equilibrium of his mind.

"Nothing," he said, "can console me; I shall never forget Marguerite. I could never have believed my uncle so hard. I thought she would write to me here. Does she even regret me? What can a school-girl know of love? She loved me because I happened to be near her. A cat, a bird, any pet, that might have been before me, would probably have played the same part in her child-life. Perhaps it is better that she should forget me. I would suffer alone; I would be nothing to her. But it is impossible; she is my only thought. Ah! accursed money! you will ever be an insurmountable obstacle. If she should love another! After all, have I the right to complain? I was mad to believe in such happiness." Thus the unhappy young man raved; loving without hope, jealous of a shadow.

One day he spoke of suicide. I was seriously uneasy, and reproached him with having only a fixed idea, and not true love. "As you wish to die," I said to him, "indifferent to the pain you will give me, let your death be of benefit at least to your country. Do you remember that you promised me not to end like a coward? Learn your profession, so that you may not injure others by your unskilfulness, and I swear soon to give you the opportunity you seek." I treated him harshly, I admit. I sent him to the barracks, telling an old non-commissioned officer to have an eye to him. In two months he could ride and handle his sword, as if he had done nothing else all his life. He, who believed himself unfitted for aught but to dust books and make catalogues, was a born soldier. I made a good spahis of him, and foresaw him a brigadier and a field-marshal. It was with delight that I observed him recover his self-command, little by little; and when, three months after his entrance into the corps, he received news of Mlle. Désormes, he had regained his equanimity and his natural cheerfulness and frankness of character, and his face had acquired that expression of will which seems to say, "I will conquer or die." At length he said to me :—

"I do not wish to play soldier any longer, like a fool, but to win my epaulettes." He showed me Marguerite's letter, written in September, and which had followed him. It was full of feeling and truthfulness, and dispelled all his lingering fears. I felt an instinctive respect for this young girl, on account of the benefit she caused my friend. It seems that she had suffered much after their separation, and grief had made her very ill. She had been thoughtful, and had

not written to Mark till her recovery. She had also had sufficient strength to hide from her father the severity and the cause of her illness.

"I was," she wrote, "very wretched after you left, at not hearing from you. I could not believe that you had forgotten me, and I imagined every possible ill. I could not sleep, or, when I sank, overcome by fatigue, it was only to see you wounded, dead. This sleep was worse than wakefulness.

"Hidden in my room, to avoid paining my father, I wept all day. More than once—may God pardon me!—I was inclined to revolt against his decision. Fanny warned me from the beginning, when I told her of my love, that my father would never consent to our marriage. I would not believe her. Ah! the fine advantage of being rich, in order to be more unhappy than the poor shepherds of our heaths! I would willingly exchange places with one of these; I could then love whom I would, and I am very sure that I would not please you less, under my homespun gown, than with all these furbelows."

A second letter, in reply to one of Mark's, said:—

"Ah! Mark, Mark, what joy, what happiness your letter gave me! I have not forgotten you; your absence confirms my love. If, while you were here, I only felt a gentle affection, I now feel profound and undying love. I love, I cannot express how, but I love you. That tells everything, does it not? You have done right to become a soldier; do not falter in your career. I await you with courage and resignation. Distinguish yourself; but be not rash; guard your life, it is mine, and return to me with high rank and ennobling badges."

7th May. The expeditionary column is on the march

for Milah. We are to attempt the conquest of little Kabylie, a mountainous country resembling Switzerland. The people who await our approach on the summits of the mountains are well armed, and have never been conquered by the Romans, the Vandals, or the Turks. It will not be very easy to lead ten thousand men up those steep declivities, in face of an active, daring foe, without heavy loss.

11th. At four in the morning we fronted the Kabyles. We were to drive them from the heights, and seize upon the Menagal defile. I will quote from Mark, who wrote his experiences to his cousin a few days afterwards:—

“A shot from the cannon was the signal of attack. My heart beat, not with fear, but with a wild start of delirious joy. The sound was echoed from hill-top to hill-top. I thought of the three blows which are given in a theatre, before the rising of the curtain, to warn the audience that the play is about to begin. Each man was at his post. An old spahi field-marshal, with yellow moustache, bronze visage, and nose cut almost in two by a sabre-stroke, looked across at me, and with a strong Alsatian accent, said:—

“‘Comrade, it is necessary to march straight; if you slip aside, see this, I shall prick you.’

“He showed me the point of his sabre. I replied:—

“‘That is enough; if you want to have the rest of your nose taken off, follow me.’

“‘We will see about that, my little friend. Forward!’

“The trumpet sounded; a fusilade was opened, and we started at full gallop. I heard the balls whistling around my ears, and involuntarily I bent my head.

“ ‘Do not fear!’ said the marshal; ‘dangerous balls make no noise; you need not be so polite!’

“The firing was now general; my comrades fell around me. Lost in the smoke and dust, I no longer saw anything; I was carried forward by my horse; I did not seek to hold him back. I heard fierce cries, and saw five or six hundred Kabyles, armed with guns and long swords, drawn up within a few feet of me. The guns were lowered; I closed my eyes, and heard the balls whistling around me. Confusion had seized upon our men; here and there horses with empty saddles were flying wildly about. The dead and wounded were lying around; some were dying, weeping, others cursing. To our shrieks of agony, of rage, of grief, the Arabs reply with their muskets; each discharge is followed by their festive cry, ‘*You you !*’ It was wild and grand. ‘Forward! and give them the bayonet,’ cried the old soldier.

“We start at the head of the line, and penetrate like thunderbolts into the midst of the enemy.

“Amongst thrusts and blows I lost sight of my Alsatian. I was alone. I heard the charge sounded, and the cry, ‘Forward! bayonets!’ A shot killed my horse. I regained my feet, to continue the fight; but the routed enemy were fleeing in the mountains.

“The old officer, as if to verify my prediction, had lost the rest of his nose.”

This was Mark’s first engagement. He was true blood, fighting fiercely and cutting through every obstacle. It would be no exaggeration to say that sabre-strokes rained from his arm.

I do not pretend to recount the events of the campaign. I shall suppress succeeding incidents, and days passed in skirmishing and in deluging rains. I come

to the second affair in which Mark distinguished himself, and was wounded.

The 19th of May, the tribe of Beni-Amram held the mountain-tops. While the infantry mounted to the assault, the cavalry turned the position on the left, and, commanded by Col. Bouscaren, we made a brilliant charge, and overthrew the enemy. The action seemed decisive enough to end the campaign; but the next day, by six in the morning, the pass of Nita-el-Missia, through which our road lay, was literally covered with white bournouses. The Kabyles had sworn that we should penetrate no further, and we were determined to pass in spite of them. The cavalry, spahis, and light infantry were sent by impossible roads, almost like rabbit-paths, to the back of the deep ravine. We met the Arabs on the mountain-tops, and while the infantry charged in front, we took them in flank, and forced them over a precipice three hundred yards deep. The fight was sanguinary, terrible. Driven by an unaccountable thirst for blood, Mark and four horsemen rushed on in advance of the squadron and in pursuit of the flying foe; but the latter, observing the small number they had to deal with, surrounded the pursuers. I rushed to their aid with my squadron, but too late, nevertheless, to prevent three of my brave spahis from falling, and Mark from receiving a wound on the head from an Arab sabre. Notwithstanding this accident, he was radiant with joy, and showed me a standard captured from the enemy.

"Blows on the head," said he, "if they do not kill, are of no importance; and as I am not killed, I shall soon be well again."

I caused him to be carried to my tent. The surgeon

pronounced the wound dangerous, and, after dressing it, told me to let the patient sleep, but to awaken him if he should wander and talk.

This phenomenon soon occurred; and, if I report here the delirious words that escaped my friend, it is to show that the idea of pre-existence and of the future life pervaded his being.

"Yes! yes!" he cried, "*I have existed from all time, from the dawn of the first day. I was born of God himself. I have passed through one hundred lives.*"

His eyes were fixed and brilliant, the tone of his voice alarmed me, and I asked if he recognized me.

"Certainly; you are the son of war."

"Why do you call me so, Mark?"

"*Kad-Aneith or the son of battle*, is it not the same thing? Have you lost your recollection? Look," he added, showing me the blue outlines of the Alps through the opening in the tent, "there are the Alps, with their snowy crests! Give the signal. The long-haired warriors thirst for combat. The air is filled with their wild cries, and the earth trembles under the feet of our horses. Here is the enemy. Tears and blood. Strike! strike at the head! *Poor Kad-Aneith!*"

I sought to recall his recollection. "You dream; it is not I that am wounded."

"I do not dream," he replied; "I recall the past, imperfectly perhaps, but I recall it. I believe that I have fever, my head pains me horribly. Why must we suffer thus in order to leave the world? I did not suffer thus the last time I died. Tell me, is there really a black dog in yonder corner?"

"No, it is my bournous."

"By heavens! I see your bournous, but there is also

the dog. 'Tis strange how closely it resembles father Carnat's. And that woman at your side, is it not Marguerite? No! it is not she; it is—but wait—"

"Mlle. Désormes cannot be here—it is no one."

"You are right, there is nothing more there to-day; but there was. I die of thirst. It is as it was before."

One of my spahis, named Kadour, a child of the desert, at that time posted at the door of my tent, came and interfered in our conversation, and said to me in his patois, half Arabic, half French, that if I gave drink to the wounded soldier, "*he was dead man!*" He even permitted himself to criticize the dressing of the wound, and proposed to me to cure Mark; but I had no confidence in Kadour's science, and I ordered him back to his post.

Mark's sufferings increased; he was no longer delirious, but groaned terribly, and pressed his head with his hands. "Cadanet," said he, "I am dying. Tell Marguerite that I love her better than my life; that it was for her that I caused myself to be killed. I suffer too much," he cried suddenly, tearing the bandages from his head.

The doctor, for whom I had sent, entered at the moment; touching Mark's head and looking at his eye, he said, turning to me:—

"I can do no more; he is a dead man."

My poor friend called me with a feeble voice, and murmured:—

"You see that all is over for me in this world. I shall recommence life in another. Cut a lock of my hair and take it to Marguerite. Embrace me. Adieu, or rather farewell till we meet again." He threw himself back. I believed him dead, and gave way to

my grief. When I raised my head, I saw Kadour cutting the unconscious Mark's hair from the wound.

"What are you doing there?" I cried.

"Allah powerful. I am *tebib* [doctor]. Your doctor know nothing! Mark not dead! Let me do!"

All hope of saving him was not yet lost. I seized the idea, and urged Kadour to act promptly. He had brought in a brazier upon which some aromatic plants were smoking. Washing the wound with a decoction of these herbs, he then mashed up some of them, poulticed the wound with the leaves, and with my help poured the remainder of the stuff down Mark's throat. After waiting for a few moments to observe the effect, he exclaimed with an air of delight—"Allah has restored him!" And he went and prostrated himself before the tent, his head to the east, to pray and to thank God.

In a few days Mark had recovered; on learning that it was to Kadour that he owed his life, he took him into his personal service and treated him as a friend.

It was amusing, yet touching, to hear this big copper-colored fellow talking to the other spahis about Mark.

"He," said he, "dog of Christian; but great mind. He, son of Allah; know more than sons of Sidna—Mahomed and of Sidna—Issa [Jesus Christ]. He believed never die. Me say like him, and me wise man, son of wise man. Allah with him; Allah great!"

He had so filled his fellow-believers with the idea of his "great friend," as he called Mark, that amongst the mussulmans Mark was looked upon almost as a saint. The capture of the standard and his dreadful wound gained him the Cross of the Legion of Honor.

The death of my captain had raised me to the command of the squadron, and Mark now filled my place, and could continue the campaign as sub-lieutenant. I thought it my duty to write in relation to Mark's wound to M. Désormes, his only relative, and who therefore ought to feel an interest in him. I informed him of his nephew's condition, and begged that he would write a friendly word to him. I also took the liberty of writing to Mlle. Marguerite, when Mark was out of danger, in order to tranquillize her mind. In a short time I received a few lines of thanks from her, but not one word from her father, who, I concluded, was more bitter than polite. But I will quote a few lines from a letter of Marguerite's to Mark, in order to put the reader in possession of what was happening at St. Jean's:—

June, 1851.

"Fanny and I were seated in the parlor, embroidering, Mme. d'Astafort was playing cards, and papa was reading the paper, when he suddenly uttered an exclamation that startled us all.

" 'Mark has been decorated,' he said. I had already heard the news from you; but as my father never mentions your name to me, I had kept the fact a secret. I pretended ignorance, and asked him innocently—'What has he done to merit it?'

" 'How simple you are, my child! he is a soldier, you know.'

" 'But you have never told me so; how could I guess it?'

"I read the paragraph aloud, and then read it three or four times to myself. I saw your wish to please me, and your hope of gaining my hand. I recalled the

commencement of your last letter. You told me you would win a ribbon, and you have won it. My father snatched the paper from my hand, telling me that I wished to learn the news by heart. Mme. d'Astafort, who always whispers aloud, imagining no one can hear her, said to Fanny: 'Ah! if Désormes had known his own mind, or had shown himself less niggardly towards his nephew! And you! if you had known how to manage him, he would now be your husband.'

"Fanny shrugged her shoulders impatiently, and, glancing at me, answered: 'I never had a taste for marriage, and for this husband less than for any other—a man who would leave me in a fortnight, to run about libraries and museums—a man who thinks of nothing but science, and will become mouldy in company with his books. Besides, if I had married him, he would not have gone to Africa to gain his ribbon.'

"'She is right,' said my father.

"I leaned towards Fanny, and whispered in her ear, in allusion to La Fontaine's fable, 'They are too green.' Fanny, pale with anger, broke her needle, and retorted, 'But good for Marguerite.'

"'What are you whispering?' said my father. 'Come! this is enough about my nephew; he has done his duty, and there's nothing more to be said.'

"Fanny made no reply; but when we were alone I saw that she was furious. She certainly does not love you; but I see plainly that she is jealous of any happiness that may befall me.

"Father Carnat is still alive. He never meets me without asking, with a mysterious air which makes me blush, for news of 'the young gentleman;' one would say that he is a real wizard. He told me he had seen

you in a dream, far away on the other side of a big blue pond amidst verdureless heaths, in a country of sun and thirst."

The old man had divined truly; we had started on a new expedition to the south, for the purpose of reinforcing the garrison of Biskra, in order to keep down the tribes of Zab. We had little to do but guard against the heat, which rises at this season to 48° centigrade in the shade, and does not fall below 36° at night. In place of fighting, we gave ourselves to horticulture, and amused ourselves with laying out a nursery of exotics.

"Our oasis," wrote Mark to his cousin, "is three leagues in circumference. A forest of palms surrounds the city, shielding us a little from the heat, especially on the banks of the Kantara, a pretty winding river, descending from the slopes of Mount Aures. In front of us, sight loses itself upon the great desert—a solemn, arid ocean of stones and sand. I love to wander over these wild places. I fancy that my will, encountering no obstacle, will sooner reach you. Would that I could follow in the body this will, which, more rapid than lightning, sweeps over immeasurable distances, embracing at once in its vision the past, the present, and the future. Nothing can stop it, nothing surprise it, nothing can daunt it. The daughter of God! it is stronger than its sister, reflection; a virgin, calm and reserved, who weighs all our actions, and envelops herself in her frigid justice. I know 'tis useless for me to attempt to curb my will. I feel that it will surely conduct this poor *me* to its only aim—*you*."

I at length received an answer from M. Désormes. It took him more than three months to think. It was

of : not much for a man whom his nephew has described as
 must so undecided. I will give this answer literally, for it
 has appeared to me very curious :—

“ST. JEAN, Aug. 30, 1851.

“Sir, all that you have told me of my nephew in-
 terests me deeply, and, much as I was grieved to hear
 of his wounds, I was delighted to see him succeed in
 his career, and obtain so glorious a reward. I regret
 that we were parted by a quarrel, which was not worth
 making such an impression on him. For my part, I
 confess that I had forgotten all about it. It all arose
 from a misunderstanding, which, thank God! has been
 of benefit to him, but which ought never to have come
 into his head.

“Since you are his friend, I ought to mention to you,
 monsieur, the motives which dictated my conduct
 towards him. I may appear careless, undecided,
 selfish, perhaps; but I thought of the happiness and
 future of my only child.

“I ought to tell you that Mme. Désormes, during
 her life, on account of family reasons that are of no
 importance, thought of marrying Margot to her
 cousin. The idea was not then disagreeable to me,
 and I kept my nephew near my daughter during his
 vacations, that they might become accustomed to
 each other. My daughter was six years of age, my
 nephew twelve; there was then no danger of love
 springing up between them. I encouraged the inti-
 macy till the time when Mark's father foolishly
 squandered his fortune. I admit that the father's
 conduct made me augur badly for the course the son
 would one day follow, and I cut short the projected
 union which my wife had encouraged. I sent my

nephew to college, and after his father's death left him to manage his own affairs. I was not sorry to let him eat the bread of labor, hoping that during this time of trial he would learn what life and society are. But natural instincts are not to be subdued, and I tell you that after I had rendered my accounts as guardian, and saw him hand over to the notary almost all he possessed to pay his father's debts, without looking over the statements to verify them, I was irritated at his contempt for money. I admired his disinterestedness, however, although I considered it misplaced. I had already been studying his character, and I saw that there was nothing in his head. He amuses himself with a flower, or an antique, and remains indifferent to material interests. He knows many useless things, but has not the first idea of practical life. I admit that he is an amiable man, but more of a child than Margot; which was not the kind of son-in-law that I wanted.

"I was angry when, in answer to my reproaches, he spoke as if he had expected to wed my daughter. He had been at my house for fifteen days, and I had really thought of a marriage for him, but with another person, and one whom he had not the good sense to regard as she deserved.

"I do not say that an alliance with Mark Valery would be beneath Marguerite, for I myself belong to the class of those who become rich without descent. I cannot reproach a young man for a poverty that is his misfortune, and not his fault; and if Mark had proved himself to be more serious, and appreciative of a fortune gained by the sweat of our ancestors, I do not say that I would have entirely rejected the wishes of my deceased wife. But he thought differ-

ently. He crossed me in my views of politics and property, and since then I let him know that he erred in believing that I had authorized him to ask for the hand of my daughter. Fortunately, Marguerite did not share in his illusions, and she is not yet of an age or disposition to partake of them. I so managed that she suspected nothing, and never will until both are married, and they can laugh at youthful follies.

"A fine position is offered my daughter, which I hope she will have the good sense to accept. She has always had a repugnance to marriage; but I am growing old, and before dying would like to see my grandchildren embarked upon the ocean of life. I hope, within the next three months, to have this important matter concluded, and if Mark will authorize me, I will find him a good match in this neighborhood; in which case we can have a double wedding at Christmas. Will you speak to him of my proposition? You may even show him this letter, if you think it desirable.

"I should also be glad, monsieur, if you would accompany your friend here, as I should be pleased to make the acquaintance of so distinguished an officer.

"Accept my respects, etc."

I did not think it prudent to show this letter to Mark. I saw him calm, in good spirits, full of health and strength. Sometimes he was disturbed if he was long without hearing from his beloved; but he had no more of those excesses of exaltation which had alarmed me. I hoped that in the end he would overcome his passion, and that, little by little, it would pass away. I did not wish to revive the dying flame. I acted thus for his good, believing that M. Désormes

would never consent that his daughter should marry him. The day that Mark should learn that her father had promised her to another, he would certainly receive a terrible blow; but I should be at his side to sustain and console him. Two months passed without news from Berri, and I began to accuse Mlle. Désormes of faithlessness. I blamed her for it, although I wished that it might be so. The situation had been made clear to me; though the procrastinating character of M. Désormes might still prolong the *denouement* for a year. The correspondence between the two lovers was recommenced, and kept up without any suspicion on his part, and Marguerite did not exhibit any serious fear of being married against her will.

"If my father has any such project," she wrote, "he hides it so well, that I believe myself justified, on my side, in concealing my resolve never to belong to any one but you."

I should have preferred it, had she made some attempt to allure her father back to his original idea; for, thanks to the awkward denials of M. Désormes' letter, it was evident to me that the uncle's advances had been plain, and that Mark had not misinterpreted them. It pleased M. Désormes to look upon these advances as null, and to excuse his own wrongdoing. Mark's modest pecuniary position did not allow him to insist, but it was for Marguerite to assume that duty. I concluded that the child lacked courage: the end will show that I was mistaken.

It was some months since we had returned to Constantine. Mark had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant on the 15th August, 1852, when he received a letter from his cousin, recalling him to her assistance.

"My father declares," she wrote, "that he has

promised my hand to M. Adalbert de Mauvezin. He has, it seems, been thinking of it for some time. The old marquis has been dead a year, and my father has been waiting to ascertain the condition of the estate. It appears that the marquis left some debts, great enough to make it necessary for his son to get a rich wife, but not great enough to induce my father to refuse to buy a title for his daughter at such a price.

"I refused, saying that the fine gentleman had been paying attention to Fanny, and was perhaps still courting her. My father only laughed, and Fanny declared there had been nothing serious in his attentions. I cannot understand my father, with his idea of making me a marchioness—he, usually so indifferent and brusque towards the nobility. Nor do I understand Fanny, with her ironical and disdainful airs in the midst of her caresses and endearments.

"I have done and said all; it is decided, and I could only obtain a respite of three months. If you are not here by that time to support me, and they drag me to the altar, I shall utter a no which will scandalize the neighborhood. I have threatened my father with it; but I no longer recognize him; he has a will of his own now, and so have I. I have declared war against him—a mute war; I need an *aide-de-camp*, and I have chosen you. You are to begin by blindly obeying me, without thought or comment. Our happiness depends upon it. First, then, write to my father, and ask his pardon for the past, but do not say a word about me. We must pretend indifference, or all is lost. I have plans of my own, which I will hereafter explain. I know my father better than you do, but you must be on the spot; come quickly."

This letter upset poor Mark; yet he was not weak-

headed, nor one of those unfortunate beings who cannot accept the trials of life. I saw now the persistency of his love, and the intensity of his jealousy. I must say that there seemed a fatality in this love, before which reason failed. I pointed out to him that he had no cause for jealousy, as Marguerite proved her love in every possible way.

"I know it; but the bare thought that another man looks at her—seeks in her eyes for encouragement—drives me wild with anger; I will make him pay for every loving glance. He who disputes Marguerite with me is my enemy; whoever he may be, his destiny is to die if he will not give her up."

I strove to calm him—to make him understand that it would be better for his honor to renounce this unfortunate attachment. I warned him that it would be said that he sought Mlle. Désormes for her money. I entreated him to think well before undertaking the journey. It was necessary for him to obtain leave of absence, and he had three months before him; and, in short, affairs had not yet come to a crisis. I also intimated the humiliation of being compelled to deceive his uncle even in order to save Marguerite; and I hinted that she would have done a thousand times better to positively refuse de Mauvezin than to impose so ignoble a part upon Mark. This did not shake his resolution; camp discipline, the climate, and the nervous excitement caused by the wounds on his head, had brought upon him a feverishness which rendered him excitable, and liable to lose his self-control. He sometimes reproached himself for having taught his cousin to love him, saying that she would have been happier if they had never met; and, to add to all, he was tortured by jealousy.

• “No! she dares not marry another, for she no longer has a heart to give any one; it would be a moral adultery. She belongs to me, and can belong to no other. They may say what they please—if necessary, they may call me a fortune-hunter; but she shall be my wife, or I will die. My love for her is greater than wretched self-love. I will silence my pride and my reason; I will sacrifice everything to her, even honor, if she asks it.”

There was no reasoning with him; he was too excited, and I had to let him act according to his wishes, or rather the wishes of his cousin. I now decided to show him M. Désormes' letter.

“It is well,” he remarked; “he invites me to the wedding; I shall go, but the intended shall dance to my fiddling. My uncle wishes me to marry the daughter of a friend; I need not be a sorcerer to guess whom—it is Fanny, always Fanny! My pretext is found. I will go; but I, or no one, shall be Marguerite's husband. In the mean time I shall write to this dear uncle, to tell him not to engage me positively to the young lady with the big black eyes before I see her again. I will pretend to reflect and hesitate, as he does. Yes! I will imitate him, and feign to be undecided. This is my determination; it is my right; everybody has his day.”

He asked and obtained a furlough. He was as much esteemed by his commanding officers as by his comrades; all saw him leave with regret. He became calm when his arrangements were made, and he felt certain of arriving at St. Jean in time.

I made him promise to write often; to keep me acquainted with passing events, and, above all, to resume his journal, and to record in it his thoughts

and feelings. I thought that it would aid him to keep his imagination in check, and to bring Dame Reason to his side. I accompanied him as far as Philippeville, where, full of hope and courage, he embarked with his spahi Kadour, and his horses.

Mark Valery to Cadanet:—

6th September, 1852.

DEAR COMRADE: I have been at St. Jean for three days. Our voyage was rough. We lost one day at Marseilles, but the next day I took the railroad for Lyons. You would have laughed to see Kadour in the car. The noise of the engine, its shrill whistle, our rapid flight, made my poor spahi believe himself lost; but with the resignation of your true Arab, he said, gravely resigning himself to his fate, "The will of Allah be done."

In the end, he finished by admiring, without understanding, wagons that could run alone. At Lyons, where we changed cars, he had time to examine the locomotive closely.

"*Sidi*," said he, "how you run so quickly? like powder from cannon."

I explained to him, but vainly, the nature of steam, and at length said, "It is thunder, shut up there."

Seeing how serious I was, he was convinced, and admired this display of human power, which he attributed entirely to the French.

"*Francis bono! bono bezef bono!*"

I told him that these exclamations compromised his dignity, for the people stared at him. He understood me, and, resuming his air of profound indifference, he murmured low, "*Sidi bono!*"

In fact, we caused a good deal of excitement all

through our journey. Our red vests and white bur-nous, and our two Arab horses, were a novelty in the central departments, and we could not move without being followed by the people, as if we were strange animals. Kadour thought it natural that he should be followed and admired; he smiled amiably at the young girls, showing his white teeth, and ogling them like an amorous tiger. The gallant Arab, with his almond-shaped eyes, straight nose, olive skin, and silken beard, is a fine type of the Arab race.

After resting my horses at Issoudun, we started for St. Jean under a sun worthy of Africa. When the heaths opened before us, Kadour, finding himself alone with me, uttered a cry of surprise—"Ah-ia, *sidi*, here like Mitidje."

The country only needed the blue background of the Atlas Mountains to resemble closely the verdant plains of Algiers. The botanist, doubtless, would find many differences, but Kadour did not notice the absence of the dwarf palms and lentise tree, replaced by the heath and fern. I had not written to any one of my arrival. My heart beat violently as I crossed the pine woods where I had fainted two years before. Then I had arrived with a broken head, and now I brought another wound, for which I had paid dearer. The old road, before broken by the rains and full of thistles, had been newly gravelled. I found the old gate painted green, and the pillars renewed. What a change!

As soon as they saw us, Pyramus and Thisbe, the two big dogs, ran up barking furiously, but, suddenly sniffing the air, they stopped, their anger turned to frantic joy; they jumped upon each other and ran around, to show me they had not forgotten the games

I used to have with them. I soon saw Master Dolin advancing slowly. Observing us go to the stables, he hastened his steps, apostrophizing us in magisterial terms:—

“Hollo, hey! friends, this is not an inn; continue; go on.”

But at my voice—

“God punish me!” he cried; “it is not you, Mr. Mark? How you are changed! what moustaches! what a black face! and then this *Orabe*, may the devil fly away with me if I did not take you for actors. I am going to take charge of your horses. Oh, the pretty ponies! Are they also *Orabes*?”

Kadour had dismounted, and waited gravely for Dolin to show him the way. Impatient at his questions and amazement, he said:—

“Say, you, monsieur! show me stables.”

My horses stabled, I learned from Dolin that M. Désormes, as usual, was overlooking his laborers, and that Marguerite was at the chateau. Hastening thither, I met Ninniche in the hall; she fled, but recognizing me, returned, and, smiling, bade me welcome. I embraced the good girl; she reddened and said: “How glad Mlle. Marguerite will be to see you! She is in the park; I will go and call her.” Putting her aside, I said:—

“No, no, stay! I will go myself.”

In crossing the garden, I observed that it was full of flowers, and that the walks were newly sanded. I reached the lake; I saw Marguerite—her who is my very life—seated, immovable, in the same place where two years before she had given me the first kiss of love. I approached softly. She slept on the grassy knoll, her back resting against a mossy tree. Her

straw hat, parasol, bouquet of flowers, and open book lay scattered in the grass. A redbreast hopped upon the branches, looking at me with curious eyes, as if he was trying to protect Marguerite. She had not heard my approach. I knelt before her and regarded her intently for a time.

How beautiful and graceful she looked, her head drooping upon her shoulder, her arms carelessly lying across her white dress! It was, indeed, my golden-haired Marguerite, become more lovely than ever. Her graceful figure was more slender, her features more fully formed. In looking upon her, a throng of memories rushed upon me—even of those days which she had passed far from my side; and, as if I could read her very thoughts, I saw, or thought I saw, my image in her dreams. I took her two hands in mine; her eyes opened slowly and looked upon me without recognition; an uncertain smile wreathed her lips; sudden light came to her eyes; she uttered a cry of surprise and joy which I can never forget, either in this life or in the next; throwing her arms around my neck, she drew my head down and covered my forehead with kisses.

“Mark, Mark! I was dreaming that you were here, and here you are! I do not dream now, do I?”

I could find nothing to say. “Yes, it is I,” expressed all. I clasped her to my heart, raining burning kisses upon her brow, her neck, her arms. Ah, my friend, what centuries of happiness are compressed into a few moments! At length, gently disengaging herself, she made me rise, and looked at me with child-like curiosity. My red vest, big boots, dark skin, moustache, short hair, and wounded forehead were all examined critically. After expressing some regret at

the loss of my abundant hair, she concluded by declaring that she prefers me as I am, and touching my cross of honor, she said :—

“I shudder to think that you might have died to give me this pleasure.”

Ah, dear Cadanet! I was more than recompensed for the blood spilled for her sake. But I was impatient to understand our position, and we profited by the only chance we may have for a long time for uninterrupted conversation, to come to an understanding. This marriage with Mauvezin seems to have been long brooded over, and constantly adjourned by M. Désormes. He was thinking of it when he drove me hence. In short, like a timid child, who, before he jumps, stands and measures the distance, retires to gather force, rushes to the edge, again turns back, and finally leaps with his eyes shut, so my uncle has at last surmounted his indecision, and has leaped bodily upon Mauvezin. The death of the father, very much embarrassed by debt, diminished the resources of the new marquis; but the addition of a title has so dazzled M. Désormes, that it is impossible even to reason with him. We must turn the position. Marguerite, without ever having seen a comedy, has invented a very pretty and really classic one. She has determined to play the part of the bantering Isabelle. She will allow the handsome Leander to visit her, but will make herself so disagreeable to him that he will renounce her of his own accord.

“Let me alone,” says she. “To avoid marrying one I do not wish to marry, is easy enough; the difficulty will be to induce my father to give his consent to my marrying as I please. That is another thing. I know that though it takes him years to decide upon

a plan, it only takes him an hour to change. If, in one way or the other, I can make M. Adalbert wound his self-love, my father, from spite, will marry me to the first convenient person. You must be this person. This is why I told you to hasten hither."

I thought it would be easier, or, at all events, more to my taste, to pick a quarrel with the newly-fledged marquis.

"I do not desire that," said Marguerite. "I foresaw that it might happen, and I took a solemn oath, which I now renew, never to marry you if you take the initiative in this matter. Moreover, if the offence comes from you, my father will never forgive you, and that is not the way to succeed."

Marguerite was right. I promised to suppress all explosions of jealousy.

"You must do more," she continued; "you must meet Mauvezin, and allow him to pay some attention to me. I risk scandal by accepting his attention and then refusing to marry him. You must be armed against all they can say of my caprices; it is not in Africa that you will have learned patience. You cannot feel jealousy, knowing my plans and seeing my every action; while, with you near to protect and sustain me, I shall feel brave and strong."

I swore to obey her, and we spoke of Mlle. d'Astafort, whose conduct had made me suspicious; Marguerite explained it by saying:—

"Fanny is difficult to understand, I admit, but I think that I know her. Her poverty mortifies her, and the great contempt she affects for wealth is the involuntary avowal of secret spite. In addition, her mother irritates her nerves. With her real good nature, Mme. d'Astafort is well fitted to humiliate and

irritate by her want of tact; but Fanny has the more merit and virtue the more she suffers. She wishes to be frank, and, though ironical and bitter words sometimes escape her, she always acts with generosity. Certainly it would have been better for her and for us that she should not be in our confidence; but I was a child when I first loved you. I was sufficiently romantic to wish her to know it. Since then I have sometimes feared her. However, she never has betrayed us, and she never will betray us. Be amiable and respectful; treat her as a true and devoted friend; she will put her self-love aside. It would be useless attempting to deceive her; she is too clear-sighted."

"We now separated, fearing to be surprised by M. Désormes, and I was once more installed in my tapestried chamber. As I crossed through the library, the evening, when my uncle filled me with hopes so intoxicating and so quickly destroyed, returned to my memory with so much vividness that I believed I was again in the past, and had never been to Africa. Kadour's countenance recalled me to the present.

My dress was soon arranged, as my baggage could not come before the next day. I joined Marguerite in the parlor; my uncle entered immediately after. Seeing me, he exclaimed:—

"So, here you are," and in a tone which seemed to imply, "May the devil fly away with you;" and then he added, "I did not expect you so soon."

I pretended not to observe this uncomplimentary reception, and embraced him warmly. He was surprised at my frankness, and after looking at my cross and uniform, he continued:—

"I congratulate you, Mark; you are a handsome soldier. Let us forget the past and think only of the

future. I have not yet spoken of yourself. You know——”

I cut him short, saying:—

“Yes, yes, uncle, we have time for that; it is useless to trouble my cousin by discussing my affairs.”

Dolin entered at the moment to summon us to dinner, and I offered my arm with a careless air to Marguerite. I admit that I did not eat like a lover, but like a real spahi. I swallowed two plates of *frumenty*, a national dish, consisting of wheat boiled in milk, the sight of which I had never been able to endure. This Gallic dish resembles paste. There is a proverb—“Who does not love frumenty is not a Berrichou.” M. Désormes was quite flattered at the justice I did to his national dish, and complimented my appetite. I had so many things to tell of Africa that the usually loquacious Dolin was silenced. He stood with open mouth, listening to my account of my different combats. He did not speak, it is true, but he gesticulated violently—rushed to an assault with me, lowered his head to avoid the bullets, and when I came to the sabre-cut on my head, he uttered so comical an exclamation that Marguerite, who had been ready to weep, burst out into a fit of laughter. This punchinello is the butt of the house. M. Désormes expends his humors upon him; and the saucy varlet, believing himself a necessary safety-valve for his master's excitement, gives himself the most absurd airs, which renders him still more ridiculous.

My cousin and I are very reserved. The comedy of indifference is not so difficult to play. Yesterday I showed my horses to M. Désormes, and paraded on the green for Marguerite's amusement. In her turn, she showed me many curiosities found during my

absence; the best were two Etruscan vases—strange things to be found in Berri.

The library has become quite a museum. I shall have time to study these curiosities, for M. Désormes keeps strict watch over his daughter, and during his necessary absences, orders Nanniche to stay with her mistress. I can see that he is not very much pleased at my presence, and, though he has forgiven me, he has become suspicious as the devil.

To-day Mme. d'Astafort and her daughter came to St. Jeans. The mother is the same rude, forward, talking creature. Mlle. Fanny has improved; her eyes are softer, her face is fuller, her figure more developed; she is a very handsome girl. She offered me her hand without affectation or prudery, and with a frankness which touched me. I wonder if M. Désormes has informed her of his projects. It appeared to me that Mme. d'Astafort made the broadest allusions to her daughter's conjugal happiness. M. Désormes affects before her the greatest firmness. I heard him whisper—

"I have done what you asked; you must do the rest."

Was it to me that he referred? It is very possible. M. Désormes must wish me to compromise myself with Mlle. Fanny; but she, having learned my secret from Marguerite, seems generously inclined to aid us in keeping my uncle in the dark. I should be a fop to think that she acted from other motives. I am certain that she has no more fancy for me than I have for her. Be that as it will, I think she is disposed to act well, and to keep our secret.

M. Désormes has invited Mme. d'Astafort and her daughter to pass a fortnight here. He surrounds

Marguerite with spies to keep her from me, and in the hopes of throwing Fanny in my path. The arrangement annoys Marguerite as much as it does me; but patience—we shall see. We pass the time in inventing a thousand *ruses* to press each other's hands, or to whisper a few words. Despite the obstacles around us, I do not lose courage or hope.

You will find this letter a little long, perhaps, but you must blame no one but yourself. You made me promise to keep you well informed of all that interested me, and I obey you. On your part, dear friend, give me news of yourself, and of all our friends.

Ever yours,

MARK.

MARK VALÉRY'S JOURNAL.

September 8th.

This morning, while we were at breakfast, Dolin told us that Fraudy (the man who had an altercation with my uncle), in passing through the *Champ de Morte* yesterday evening, had seen an opening at the foot of the artificial hillock there, the last rains having partially washed away one side.

The heat was so great that, though the field was near, we were compelled to take the carriage. I was attracted thither by curiosity, and a half certainty of discovering some mystery. My passion for archaeological researches again possessed me. This is not astonishing, as love of study and ardent longing for knowledge, which diminish while the heart is bleeding, revive with its happiness.

On arriving, we saw an opening, some three feet broad and two feet high, at the base of the sandy slope, formed by the washing of the artificial hillock.

The most interesting curiosities in the library of St. Jean had been picked up about this spot. Workmen, summoned in case it should be necessary to clear away the rubbish, stood around. M. Désormes proposed that some one should venture in; but not one of them wished to risk it.

Father Carnat, who was pasturing his herds upon the heath, now approached. He stood, with chin thrust forward, and hands resting upon a long staff, staring silently into the hole gaping at our feet like a huge mouth.

"Comrades," exclaimed one of the workmen, "last night I heard the *lupeu* cry by the old quarry."

"If evil spirits are in the country," remarked a second, "they have certainly come from out of there; 'tis better to fill up the hole."

"Old man," questioned a third—the gamekeeper—addressing Carnat, "you, who know the history and marvellous stories of the country, can perhaps tell us what this opening means which excites so much talk and guessing among our friends here."

"I have heard it said in past times," answered the old man, "that on this estate there was once a woman buried alive; here may be the very spot."

"It may be so, good shepherd," replied the keeper; "and as it is not against the law, and M. Désormes desires it, the hole may be at once entered."

"Oh! by the holy Chrism," answered the first speaker, "I would not go in for one hundred good francs."

It is impossible to say if the man was in earnest, or only wished to be bribed; however, losing patience, I exclaimed, "You are all boobies; I will go myself;

clear the entrance; here, Fraudy, your pick-axe, you can earn twenty francs."

The desire of gain silenced superstition. "The deuce," he cried, "a Louis d'or, that suits me. I already owe you something, M. Mark, for having saved me from prison."

Sending Kadour for tapers, while Fraudy cleared the entrance, I proposed to my uncle to accompany me.

"Thank you, Mark! I do not wish to get the rheumatism."

"Then," replied I, jokingly, "I will go alone, and, according to law, I will divide with you, as proprietor, any treasure I may find."

"Agreed," he answered, in the same tone; "but I will make you a present of all you find."

"Suppose it is the ghost, M. Julien?" questioned father Carnat, smiling maliciously.

"I will bestow it upon him for a wife," replied my uncle, who loved to appear daring in the eyes of his workmen.

Father Carnat drew me towards him.

"There is an ugly present! Do not go further, my son; indeed, it will be better not. I do not say that the dreadful ghost is in there, but that she might be. There are sometimes histories told in jest which are found true. Long ago there was another religion in this land, and it is possible that the spirit and her red-headed attendants finding themselves treated with contempt by Christians, hid herself here; and if my dog could speak, he would tell us everything; because you see when beliefs become old, men tire of them. Then the brutes take up with them, and that is why it is said of useless things, that 'they are good only for

dogs.' I have something like remembrance of having seen a bank there; it has been destroyed a long time, perhaps when I was first born upon this earth."

The old sorcerer's mysterious words but excited my curiosity; and when Kadour arrived with the necessary things, I stationed him at the opening of the cavern, confiding to him the rope fastened around my waist, and bidding him to loosen it as I advanced, or to tighten it if he felt me falling. On entering the "throat of hell" as the peasants called it, a green serpent glided between my legs and hid in the bushes, giving occasion for fresh remarks from the superstitious peasants; I paid no heed to them, being too deeply absorbed in my own thoughts.

A precipitous passage, formed by two lateral walls, led to a steep stairway that descended many yards under ground; at the foot was a small circular vestibule, the ceiling ornamented with panels, contrived in the soft stone. The beams of a door, no longer existing, were visible in the masonry of the wall; it gave entrance into a room some twenty feet square. Though the heat was stifling, I continued my explorations. The walls were plastered with stucco, upon which was frescoed an ornamented cornice. Upon the wainscot and panels were traced, upon a light background, figures of a reddish-brown hue. Their coarse designing, and short, squat forms, reminded me of those on the vases reputed of Phœnician origin. This hypogeum was inclosed by large slabs, forming a flat roof, divided by four sculptured panels. From the centre hung a fragment of chain, to which a lamp, now lying on the floor in a thick bed of grayish dust, had once been attached. Near the door was a stone seat, and a niche, containing a vase made of red earth,

called Arrezzo pottery—an exquisitely delicate *relievo*. Scattered around were bits of metal and remnants of precious stuffs. In the centre of the hypogeum I remarked an elevation where the funeral urns, or sarcophagi, must have been placed. In approaching it, I stumbled against a tripod; it fell with a dull, heavy thud. The noise made me tremble; I shall, I thought, awaken the occupants of this silent abode.

My waxen taper not sufficiently illuminating the chamber, I lighted several, and untying the rope from my waist, continued the exploration of this singular and interesting retreat. There were two statuettes of baked earth, a chimera, and a winged sphinx; two amphoræ, with black feet carved in *relievo*; a steel sword, with straight blade and coral hilt; an elliptical bronze chest, called a cist, its sides traced with sharply graven designs. Raising the lid of this antique *corbeille*, I saw a gold and emerald collar, a small figure in yellow amber, a mirror, a strigil of silver, a richly mounted malachite cup, bracelets, a breast-plate, a gold nuptial gown, with rings, ear-rings, buckles, and long hair-pins. Beside this wealth lay some worm-eaten slabs, inlaid with ivory and silver, making me think that here was the *débris* of a sarcophagus of which I saw no other trace.

Wishing to return weighted with my trophies, I loaded my pockets with the jewels, intending to offer them to Marguerite.

The value of my prize did not yield me great or unalloyed satisfaction. Indeed, I was almost ashamed of myself, and felt as if I had been robbing some one. It seemed a dream, that I should be the first to penetrate here; to be alone in this sanctuary, the dust of which had not been trodden by human foot for more

than twenty centuries. Little by little, profound sadness and a real remorse took possession of me. It appeared dreadful thus to violate the asylum of the dead, perhaps to trample upon the bones of those sleeping to eternity; and I was tempted to flee.

A dream of two years before, which at the time struck me from its similarity with one dreamed by Carnat, returned to my memory in all its vivid details, with overwhelming distinctness. I remembered that here, on this spot, I had seemed to sleep beside a corpse; only in the dream the entrance or passageway before me was much larger than this, and opened upon a wood. Through it I had seen Marguerite and Carnat advancing to my rescue.

But a few moments ago, the old sorcerer, father Carnat, had warned me not to enter here. Had he, I asked myself, any knowledge of the existence of this mortuary chamber? This tomb explains the name *Champ de Mort*—"the ghost," or "the dead," it is all one; and, again, the word *champ* is perhaps here but the corruption of the Celtic word *cam*—vaulted chamber.

Lost in rêvery, I commenced to give utterance to my thoughts, exclaiming, "Where is she, the beautiful dead, the mysterious essence?" Scarce was my apostrophe finished, when the ground sank slowly from under my feet; a long plank tilted up with a lugubrious, creaking noise, and one end erected itself before me, by what movement of its hidden spring I cannot explain, and I rolled into the dust-filled opening. Springing to my feet, I found myself face to face with a motionless, white form. It would be impossible to describe, or even recall, my feelings. Mute, unreflecting terror seized me; rushing for the door, I

was unable to find it, and I constantly came back upon the apparition. In the vacillating light of the taper, it seemed to quiver. I cried wildly—

“’Tis the dead one! ’tis the dead one returned here!”

Closing my eyes to see it no longer, and striving to recall vanished reason, I at length resolved to brave the apparition by boldly approaching it. Oh, weak, cowardly imagination! the object of my senseless terror was a statue of life-size, enveloped from head to foot in drapery of marble. Lying for ages under the plank, whose spring or secret mechanism my unconscious foot had touched, the plank had slipped aside, overthrowing me, releasing the statue, and raising it to a standing position. Not stopping to examine my prize closely, I resolved to take it with me, as earnest of the valuable treasures buried in the cave. All my efforts to lift it were useless. I could scarce stir it from the spot. I called Kadour, who, as an Arab, ought to have had at least as many prejudices and superstitions as the peasants of Berri, but who, nevertheless, made no objection, and assisted me to draw the precious antique from the cavern. We returned with it to the light of day; the men recoiled on seeing it; the women and children, who had been attracted thither by curiosity, fled, and only father Carnat approached the statue, although hesitatingly. He wished to preserve his prestige in the eyes of the peasantry as a sorcerer whom no supernatural being could alarm; his face assumed a singular expression of terrified wonder.

“Well, father Carnat!” I exclaimed, laughing, “you do not recognize her. It is the awful spirit, as you said.”

"That may be! that may be!" he answered, in gruff tones; "but to disinter that which has been interred is never well, M. Mark; it is I who tell you so."

His dog was running around the statue, sniffing it distrustfully, when his master called him. The two went off together, followed by most of the old women, doubtless to consult him whether to fear or adore this supernatural being. The statue was perfectly preserved, and an admirable relic of the most flourishing Grecian epoch. It now stood alone at the mouth of the cavern. Fearing it might be injured by the ignorant and superstitious peasantry, I placed Kadour to guard it, while, accompanied by M. Désormes and Marguerite, I once more penetrated to the hypogeum, and examined its treasures.

"This is worth a good deal, certainly," said he, in a disappointed tone.

"Yes, and you resigned all right and title to me, did you not?"

"True, true; I admit it; I made a bad bargain, Mark."

"I have, then, the right to dispose of everything as I please?"

"Forsooth, you have."

"Then, cousin," I replied, turning to Marguerite, "I give you everything here, for your collection."

Marguerite at first intended to leave the curiosities where they had been found, but on remembering how much there was to tempt cupidity, she resolved to carry them to St. Jean. The workmen, reassured by her presence, at once commenced their removal. As it would be necessary to sift the dust in the hypogeum before the smaller articles of value could be collected,

they began by removing the larger ones—the tripod, coffer, lamp, vases, and statuettes.

“Do you know, comrades,” said Fraudy, “all that old Carnat sings of is foolishness. There is no more of a ghost in this place than in my hat. We were stupid to have feared to enter here; we might have divided these treasures with M. Désormes.”

“Oh! I am not sorry for it,” cried another; “these things are not worth much; they are all broken.”

Superintending myself the removal of the precious statue, I had it laid upon a litter and carried in state—as the great dames of antiquity were transported.

For the last hour the weather had been threatening, and ere half the journey had been accomplished we were overtaken by a dreadful storm of thunder and lightning, hail and rain. Dolin could not control his plunging horses; man and beast, statue and antiquities, were obliged to seek in haste the nearest shelter. It was midnight when we reached home, thoroughly wet. Marguerite had her treasures placed in the library. How sweetly the dear girl reproached me for rashly undertaking that underground expedition, while praising my resolution and courage!

Umph, courage! I had not boasted of my mortal terror before that statue. *Apropos*, why had it no pedestal?

September 9th. It is of a remarkable type. The forehead is Grecian—low and straight—but the facial angle recalls somewhat an Egyptian profile; the nose is small and delicate, rather raised, with slightly dilated nostrils; the upper lip short and full; the mouth small and well shaped; the eyes large and well opened, and their enamel so natural as to deceive one; the arch of the eyebrow is lengthened, and seems to pre-

serve a brown tinge, giving a darker shade to the eyelash, which indicates that this work of art was colored to imitate the women of antiquity, whose custom it was to paint a dark line around the eyes and brows.

The heavy masses of wavy hair, wound around the head in the Grecian style, show traces of gilding; the throat, breast, shoulders, and arms, not hidden by drapery, are of exquisite shape. This statue of a young girl is without doubt an image of the dead, if it is not that of a goddess. The head inclines slightly to the right, the right hand supporting the folds of the mantle, covering the left shoulder and falling, in the Grecian style, under the right arm in heavy folds. The workmanship is so finished and perfectly preserved that, as in some of Canova's statues, you can see the wrinkles and pores of the skin. The tunic falls to the feet and partially conceals them; one would swear it was of cloth, and fitted to the form, whose beauties it serves but to reveal. The genius of the artist-carver of this *chef-d'œuvre* knew how to unite poetry of sentiment with reality of detail. The effect of the light tissue ancient poets called *vent et image* is perfectly represented, and one is tempted to raise the folds of the pallium to assure himself that this slender, graceful creature is not a thing of reality, a handiwork of nature.

Femineum lacet sic per bombycina corpus.

The tunic retains traces of coloring. All the parts exposed are of a hue similar to that of the Arab women.

I thought at first that it was one of the Muses, but the absence of every usual attribute of these divinities shows the error of the conjecture. Had not the vases and other things been of a much later style, the resem-

· blance of this piece of sculpture to the statue of one of the four Balbas found in the excavation of the theatre at Herculaneum might carry it back to the Greco-Romaine epoch. The jewelry and golden ornaments of filigree probably formed the head-dress of the corpse—of which, to my great surprise, I had found no bones—and made me think the statue of Etruscan origin, though I doubt if at the time the art of sculpture had reached such perfection among the Oscans.

The statue has a very pretty effect standing in the middle of the library, upon a pedestal raised two feet from the floor, and covered with red velvet fastened with silver nails. The light falls slantingly upon the figure. The face, half turned towards the door, seems to regard with curious and mocking air the visitors who come to admire it.

I do not know how to explain the presence of this Etruscan or Phœnician tomb upon the soil of central Gaul. Legends, or rather traditions, it is true, give as the founder of the city of Avirak (Bourges) the Tyrian Hercules, personification of the adventurous and commercial genius of the Phœnicians. They were called from time to time Sidonians, Canaanites, and Philistines, and established colonies in Greece, Thessaly, Spain, and Etruria. Indefatigable navigators, they traversed the seas in order to sell in Europe the products of their industry—silks, mosaics, statues, ornaments of glass, gold, and other precious metals. They taught the ancients their religious doctrines and their system of cosmogony. In the days of Homer, Phœnician industry had already attained a high state of perfection; but in art they were not sufficiently advanced to produce so perfect a work as the statue

found in our hypogeum. I suppose it would be carrying speculation too far to say that this tomb was built, three or four thousand years before our era, by the Pelasgi, who, coming from Asia, possessed themselves of the morasses of Europe. This industrious and enterprising race—who, like the modern Israelites, seemed pursued by destiny, always persecuted, hunted, or reduced to slavery by new conquerors, Hellenic or Latin—have left behind them no other mementos than the massive structures called Cyclopean walls. These antediluvians are held in the memory of the people as demons or evil genii; nevertheless, they are the ones who raised the first altars to those mysterious and terrible gods, Cabires and Dioscures, and built the first cities.

The latest comers, the white-skinned races of Aryan descent, seemed to accept as a duty the destruction of the ancient red races, daughters of *Cus*. This hatred is perpetuated, even in our days, in America, where the white Anglo-Saxon destroys remorselessly the red-skinned Indian, nearly related to the primitive Pelasgi. Some tribes of the Pelasgic nation, known in Italy as the Siculi, Opicans (from *ops*, the earth), were lost in the Tyrrhenian element coming from Phœnicia. These became the Etruscans, whose language and writings are derived from the Phœnicians, their mythology from the Assyrians, their art and architecture from the Egyptians. It is from them that the Romans derived a large portion of their religion, their customs, and their language. But Rome, a daughter of Etruria, assumed the task of overthrowing in Europe this civilization, which could be compared with that of Egypt in the East. The

Etruscan had destroyed the Pelasgian; the Roman destroyed the Etruscan.

All this, however, does not explain the presence of an Oscan monument in the fields of Berri. I should not have been surprised to have found the sword of a Gaul amid the most precious or dearest relics the Etruscan dame had caused to be buried with her. Our history is so obscure that I give up all attempts to trace it. Why did not our bards write, in place of singing?

10th September. Marguerite has received permission from her father to ride my horse. He is very gentle, and I have commenced giving her lessons in riding. My lessons are now given on the green before the house. I hope that we shall soon be allowed to ride through the country, when we can converse with freedom. There is certainly nothing to equal a woman's wit; she can always make an opportunity. I should never have invented such a pretext.

11th September. Mme. d'Astafort and her daughter, their trunks and boxes, arrived to day. They have installed themselves here, and have brought enough luggage to last them on an Indian voyage. Amongst other things, a cage of canaries and a hideous lizard, so thin and deformed, as to look as if cut out of pasteboard.

Mlle. Fanny came on horseback. I did not know that she could ride; I should have hoped not. She will now make a third in my projected rides with Marguerite.

12th September. M. de Mauvezin came to-day. If distasteful to me two years ago, when he had no pretensions to Marguerite's hand, how much more so is he now, that he regards himself as her future husband!

I judged the marquis ill, or did not observe him closely at Mme. d'Astafort's—when he seemed to me effeminate. He is twenty-five or thirty, blond, with blue or rather gray eyes. I do not know that he is stouter, but he seems to me stronger and more manly, though retaining his fresh rosy color, which gives him an effeminate look, and I believe he pretends to be near-sighted, in order to use a glass that enables him to stare at people with an impertinent air. He is a great hunter, and passes his life in the woods. An affair of honor, in which he killed his adversary on the spot, has given him, for twenty miles around, the reputation of a redoubtable duelist and a dangerous man. 'So much the better! I have promised not to seek cause of quarrel with him, but not to let him ride roughshod over me. I hope he will soon partake of the antipathy with which he inspires me.

We were all in the garden, and while he was devoting himself to my cousin, Mlle. d'Astafort took my arm and questioned me closely about my African experiences, my feelings, and thoughts. She then spoke of Marguerite, who, she pretends, no longer reposes full confidence in her.

"We chat from time to time, but upon such trifling subjects that our conversations are but a waste of words. I am sorry her father is so obstinate about marrying her to M. de Mauvezin. She will never be happy with him."

"She shall never marry him," I cried. "It cannot be."

"I hope sincerely you speak advisedly, for I love Margot as a sister, and would like her to be your wife. You would strive to make her happy, would you not?"

"I swear it to you, for I love her passionately, and would joyfully sacrifice life for her."

"If it could only be, I should wish to be loved like that," said she. "But have you thought of the scandal her refusal to marry the marquis will occasion? Under his apparent good nature, Désormes has an iron will. Do not deceive yourself."

"But perhaps I too have an iron will."

"Good," she answered, in a low tone; "but I, what am I to do? My mother and your uncle have determined to marry us. M. Désormes wrote you in Africa to this effect, and you returned under the pretext of becoming better acquainted with me, answering neither yes nor no as to the future—only asking for time. This was told me under the seal of secrecy. Ought I to allow it to be believed that you are in love with me? Ought I to be so devoted to Marguerite as to aid in deceiving everybody? My position is delicate, and the part which I play on account of love for you two is far from agreeable. What return do I receive, but the semblance of friendship from Marguerite, who only half confides in me?"

"You will gain my friendship," I cried, impulsively—"a friendship warm and devoted, beyond all doubt."

"Yes, the friendship of such a man is much, and I shall be proud of it. I accept. But, my friend," she continued, pressing my hand almost convulsively, "you will try to render my part less painful; you must show more *empressement* towards me. Before the world, be my lover; when alone, my brother; and I will speak of our dear Marguerite. Do you agree?"

"Does Marguerite understand the comedy we are to engage in before your mother? I would not give her the shadow of a cause to doubt me."

"Is she still jealous of me? It is foolish and unjust; or perhaps she is not yet sure of you."

Fanny spoke so passionately that she alarmed me. The deceit she wished to practise to aid Marguerite appeared to me needless, and to exceed the necessities of the case. I wished to show her this, when we found ourselves face to face with Mme. d'Astafort, who had turned back, and spoke to me so loudly that every one could hear.

"Well, my friend, I will not again confide my daughter to your care; you return her to me as red as a cherry."

Though a spahi, I reddened at this coarseness. When thinking of the trivial, commonplace, uneducated set that surrounded Marguerite, I am always so surprised that her manners are so refined, her sentiments so elevated. I cannot help murmuring to myself sometimes, *Margaritos ante*.

M. de Mauvezin glanced at me ironically, as if to felicitate me on my conquest. Remembering that he had been one of Fanny's adorers, I considered his manner impertinent and cowardly; but I reflected that perhaps he has never thought of her, and, what is more, I promised to be patient. He talked politics with Mme. d'Astafort, who is a legitimist, at least she thinks so. Without addressing myself to Mauvezin, who is wedded to his opinions, I made him some very short replies, and the big lady, not wishing to yield the principles of her ancestors, the Tortiaux, nor to displease me, her anticipated son-in-law, was involved in most amusing embarrassment. I would have drawn her further on, had not the fear of mortifying her daughter checked me. Besides, Boc, the poet, whom I had formerly met at Mme. d'Astafort's,

joined us; he fell into the discussion, but did not show himself as cutting as I anticipated. He seemed gloomy. We soon became better acquainted. He is a young man of such ingenuous and inoffensive vanity, that one is almost disposed to admire him from the praises he bestows upon himself. He believes he is called to high literary and political destinies, but, in the main, is not a bad fellow. His mother died a year ago. She received a life annuity of three thousand francs from my grandfather's estate, for faithful services. While she lived, Boc was comfortable. It is said, "the priest must live by his altar," but Boc cannot live by his poetry alone. He only owns the small cottage in which he lives, at St. Aôût, and the sterile field surrounding it. In the provinces no long credit is given to the owner of so poor a feoff. Boc, unthrifty as are ever children of the muse, had run into debt, and M. Chassepain to-day threatened to seize his little property. The poor fellow did not know what to do when he told me of his troubles.

"My uncle will extricate you from this embarrassment," I remarked. "The sum you are troubled for is but two thousand francs, a mere nothing to him; he will not abandon the son of his wife's foster-mother."

"I do not wish to ask anything of M. Désormes. He would probably refuse me, or give alms as to a beggar."

"Then, my dear sir, you must make up your mind to pay."

"So I have resolved. M. Chassepain is to sell my poor nest, while the poet, stricken by the tempest of adversity, will terminate his wretched existence in some dark pool."

"Come! come! M. Boc, a truce to poetry; let us talk prose. Will you accept my assistance?"

"No, sir, I thank you," he replied, in a tone that showed me I had mortified him.

I spoke to M. Désormes about him. He answered, "Rosalie feathered her nest while in old Valery's service, and her son has no right to ask aid of us."

I knew that this was not true, and that she was honest. Thinking it hard that her son should suffer from ingratitude at the hands of the old man's heirs, I went myself to the notary and bought all his debts.

My short interview with Fanny had filled me with doubts. I sought another opportunity of speaking to her, intending to persuade her to aid us without so much diplomacy. But she was angry that I did not blindly acquiesce in her wishes and devote myself to her in public, and she avoided all explanations. Her idea is a strange one. Indeed she is a singular girl, to willingly risk compromising herself for one who does not love her; she must have some ulterior motives.

13th September. My uncle this morning received a visit from an eccentric gentleman with a restless eye, turned up nose, absurdly pursed up mouth, and not a vestige of beard upon his face; he looks like an old woman. He talks fast, in a sharp tone, gesticulates much, and does not keep still for a moment. I suspect him of having a perpetually expanding spring in his stomach. In black coat and white cravat, he started early this morning on foot from Issoudon. He is a professor of chemistry at a college in Bourges, and his name is not less bizarre than his whole little person—it is Pillepuce; but, thinking it more scientific, he signs himself Pilpus.

"My visit has two objects," said he; "the first, to shake hands with you, for, my dear M. Désormes, we are old acquaintances; the second, to see your valuable statue, and the hypogeum, found by your researches near St. Jean, so say the daily papers. Is there any truth in the statement? Have you really found something? I never believe in the newspapers, and I wish to have ocular and tangible proof."

We took him to the library; he examined the statue from every point. The absence of a pedestal struck him as it had me. He admired the lifelike expression of the eyes to such a degree, that he asked permission to examine them closely, and see if they were of glass.

"Strange!" he cried from time to time, as if overcome. "Beautiful, very beautiful! very strange! You have not chipped off a small piece, to assure yourself of the substance? Who knows! if I only had a morsel."

"Do not dream of such a thing," I cried; "one does not chip a work of art as he does a rock."

"A work of art," he repeated, dancing around the statue, "a work of art! is it really a work of art?"

"What would you call it?" I asked.

"A result of science. A work of man or of nature."

I did not understand him.

"Can you tell me," he cried, excitedly, examining the hands and garments of the statue through a microscope, "what substance this is?"

"Is it not marble?"

"Who can tell? But are you a geologist, a mineralogist, sir?"

"Little of either."

"I am both, and I tell you that if this is marble, it is a marble that I cannot classify—at least not yet."

Wait, you are intelligent and may understand—though perhaps you will think me foolish, *n'importe!* If I had spoken of the electric telegraph, photography, and a thousand other things, thirty years ago, you would have laughed in my face. To return to my idea—my specialty is metamorphism. We call the law of metamorphism the transformation of any substance caused by the contact or proximity of another substance acting upon it. The results of metamorphism may be developed into infinite modifications, as one substance is constantly modified by another. To give you geological examples, I will mention marble, dolomite, and gypsum, which are calcareous rocks metamorphosed by heat, and under the influence of gases, acids, and sulphurous vapors. You understand, do you not?"

"Not much," replied M. Désormes.

"Never mind, never mind," answered the little man, at the same moment walking, talking, and perspiring with incredible vivacity. "To return again to an established idea of mine. Each and every organic particle, in undergoing metamorphosis, follows the composition of the earth where it is placed. Thus, all woods buried in earth either now or formerly subjected to silicious infiltration, will become jasper; so ammonite will become transformed into iron pyrites in ferruginous earth; bones will turn to a phosphate of lime by the combination of phosphoric acid with a salifiable base. Signor Legato, a Florentine of great genius, amongst other discoveries, found the secret of transforming to jasper, vegetables and animals; but preserving their forms and coloring. I have seen polished plates intended for tables or mantel-pieces which were composed of organic matter.

Several of his anatomical pieces were admirable. I am striving to revive his discovery, as he carried his secret with him to the tomb. I often ask myself whether, in digging in the earth, I shall not regain this secret, perhaps known to the ancients; or whether I may not place my hand upon a primitive being of our own species preserved by the natural law of metamorphism, which would be even a more interesting discovery."

M. Désormes' lips were wreathed in a smile of profound pity. "Mad, perfectly mad," he whispered.

Indeed, even I thought that M. Pillepuce carried his mania a little too far. At the same time, his reasoning did not confuse me, and I admitted that perhaps some day a specimen of the primitive races turned into chalk or jasper might be found.

"But what connection do you hope to find between metamorphism and this Greek statue?"

"Greek! Greek or not, what do I care? Is there not here before us a human being? Sir, you must know that your discovery is one that is of profound interest to all mankind."

He darted at the statue, and seized its small hand, as if determined to break off a finger. Pulling him back a little roughly, I exclaimed:—

"Take care; do not dare to break off the smallest portion!" I was very angry.

The professor raised his hand to his arm. Half sick and whiter than the statue, he silently seated himself at the further end of the library.

"Oh, sir, you squeezed my arm so tightly that I have no feeling left in my right hand! What numbness! This pain is insupportable!"

I excused myself for my haste, though, not having

squeezed his arm, I felt sure he must have been seized with sudden cramp.

15th September. A sad event has occurred—one which the superstitious do not fail to attribute to the influence of the statue. This unfortunate statue! Every one wants it—some from ignorance, others from knowing too much.

My uncle yesterday, in compliment to Mme. d'Astafort, invited to dinner M. de Mauvezin, Doctor Thibaut, M. Chassepain, and M. Michel, the engineer. M. Michel is not a metamorphic maniac like M. Pillepuce, but mineralogy has turned his head, and he pretends to determine and classify all substances at a glance, or by the aid of a small bottle of acid which he always carries about him. Skilful as he boasted himself to be, he was at fault when he examined the statue. He walked around it, desired to scrape it, and actually did rap, with the handle of his knife, upon the marble folds of the mantle, which resounded under the blow like a flint.

"Can it be of marble?" said he; "a red jurassic limestone? No, the robes are of jasper—a pale yellow jasper. It is a strange compound, and may be none of these."

He made me shiver. I feared that he would chip it. My annoyance was greater when he drew that accursed phial from his pocket, to try whether the naked portions were calcareous. I formally opposed his intentions, though he assured me he would not harm the statue. I was much excited. M. de Mauvezin's presence rendered me jealous and irritable. I dared not leave the geologist alone with the statue, and I was tormented by the knowledge that my rival was near Marguerite. I was called from the room for

a moment, and when I returned I found that M. Michel had taken advantage of my absence to make his experiment.

As I entered, I heard him say, "The robes are silica, a sort of jasper, but the arm and all the naked parts bubble like lime under the acid. I think the statue is formed of different substances—lime and silex—but so skilfully blended, so admirably carved, that it is impossible to trace the line of demarcation."

I was angry at seeing two red spots upon the folds of the pallium, a third upon the tunic, and a fourth upon the round and delicate arm of the precious antique. I spoke harshly to the geologist; I reproached him for the impertinence of his act. He only laughed, assuring me, with a provoking air, that he would return when I should be no longer here.

"You cannot run off with a statue," he continued; "if it were a handsome girl, I should not say as much."

I believed he had discovered my secret with Marguerite, and, to revenge himself for my ill-humor, had made the allusion.

"May the devil fly away with you, if he does not find you too stupid!" I replied.

Marguerite reproached me for my rudeness with a look. How much more do I reproach myself now. It seemed as if my malediction brought misfortune to the poor fellow. He had come on foot with the notary. The weather being dark and rainy, M. Désormes wished them to stay over night; but M. Chassepain had business at home at Ardenes the next morning. My uncle ordered the pony harnessed to the spring-wagon, and sent the unlucky Dolin to drive. They started at eleven at night. This morning Dolin returned without horse or wagon. He had left both in the bog three or

four leagues from here. His deposition, written by M. Désormes at his dictation, to be used at the inquest, was at once whimsical and sad.

"It was so dark and foggy that nothing could be seen. I lighted the lantern; the wind almost immediately blew it out, and I was unable to relight it. The further we travelled, the more it fogged, the more it winded, the more it darked. I had taken a short cut in order to go straight to Ardentes. M. Chassepain declared that I was all wrong, and that we ought to turn to the left. I did not know where I was, and I replied: 'That may be, M. Chassepain; that may be.' So I turned the way he said; but by going to the left I lost the road, and there we were tramprosing up and down the heaths for two long hours. All of a sudden, up came the horse slap against a wall; it was a farm wall. M. Chassepain wanted me to get down to ask the way; but so many dogs were howling about, that I might have been gobbled up if I had gone into the place. By dint of hallooing and shouting, I saw a man opening a little lattice, and I heard him cock his gun. I told him that I was Dolin, and not to be afraid—that we were lost. He didn't believe me, but called us tramps. At last, after being quieted, he told us we were at Petites Landes—two good leagues from here, on the wrong side for Ardentes. This was towards two o'clock in the morning. Monsieur the engineer wished to stop here; he would have done well to do so; but the farmer would not let him in. We started again. I cut across the heaths to gain the road to Châteauroux; we had not gone far when my horse fell and the carriage upset, spilling us all into the water, which was slime up to our waists. It was as cold as ice. I scrambled out, and called M. Chasse-

pain, who was scolding and swearing as I never heard notary swear before. The engineer said nothing; it was so dark I could not see him, and there was no way of lighting the wet lamp. I heard M. Chassepain say, 'Get out of there as you best can, stupid; I prefer going on foot.'

"Once alone, terror seized me, and I took to my legs, and got mixed up in the bog.

" 'I must be in the Breme,' I said to myself, 'or there is some devilment about, sure!'

"At daylight I found I had walked in a circle, and was within fifty feet of the bog. I saw the wagon upset and the belly of the poor drowned pony, but there was nobody about. Three laborers were crossing the heath; I called them, and told them my trouble; they cut the horse's harness, and when the wagon righted, there were M. Michel's legs sticking out. The engineer was drowned; he had been caught under the carriage, and there he stayed; he had his pipe in his hand; I wasn't astonished that he didn't say anything. This is what happened, and I sign this declaration."

M. Désormes and I went immediately to the place of the accident. It was within a league of St. Jean, in the midst of the heath. A cold wind swept over the vast plains, and the sky was gray and lowering. On arriving, we saw two gendarmes, the gamekeeper, and a knot of peasants on the edge of the bog. M. Michel's body, half naked, as Doctor Thibaut had stripped it to examine it, lay on its back, its face yet splashed with mud.

"He must have been smothered," remarked the doctor to me, "as I see no wound. Here is a spot upon the arm looking like a recent burn, but it, with these scorches on his coat and pantaloons, was pro-

duced by the acid from the phial he always carries about with him, and which was broken by his fall."

"Poor Michel!" said my uncle, "see, he is marked exactly as he marked the statue."

While M. Désormes, as mayor of the commune, made out the *procès verbal* and took the various affidavits, the peasants attributed M. Michel's death to the evil eye which had been cast upon him by an imaginary being; and although all knew this man more or less, none said a pitying word over his corpse. "Happily, he was a bachelor," gravely said one of the policemen. This was the only funeral oration of the poor engineer.

Dolin was so terrified, and had such a fear of justice and what might be the result of this involuntary murder, that he almost upset us twice in driving us to M. Chassepain's at Ardentès. By my uncle's direction, Kadour took the reins, and he acquitted himself very well as coachman. We found the notary in bed, shivering with ague. When he learned of the death of his travelling companion, abandoned by him under the pretext that a man of such strength ought to be able to extricate himself unaided from any danger, he remarked with a sigh: "Death must come to us all. I feel certain that I am going to be very ill."

Then there followed a shower of complaints and scoldings against Dolin, whom he promised to pay damages for the time he should lose. I could not help rejoicing over his sickness, when I heard him whisper to M. Désormes, "this will delay our business with Mauvezin."

Selfishness of love! I prayed that the notary's sickness might last a long time.

While returning to St. Jean, M. Désormes was in a very bad humor. He spoke rudely to Kadour about his driving, as if he ought already to know how to drive well. The spahi looked at him steadily, and, without answering a word, gave the reins and whip to Dolin, saying, "Drive." Then he lighted a cigarette, and, crossing his legs, did not speak again. M. Désormes now vented his anger on Dolin, who kept repeating, as if in a somnambule state, "It is the fault of the black dog and the stone woman."

He went to bed as soon as we arrived at home, and Manniche gave us breakfast. Marguerite was very much troubled at the tragical death of poor Michel, and what we told her seemed to surprise her. Pale and trembling, she suddenly came from the cabinet of antiquities into the parlor, saying that the statue was following her with evil eyes. The fact is, that her enamel eyes are surprisingly natural.

I had an opportunity of speaking to Marguerite for ten minutes, and informed her that her marriage was delayed by Chassepain's sickness.

16th September. A great dinner at St. Jean; some huntsmen, among others my rival, were present. They were boasting of hunting exploits, and were so eloquent that the young ladies insisted upon having a hunt organized for next week. That is to say, that Fanny, proud of her horsemanship, is delighted to show off, and Marguerite hopes for a moment's freedom to speak to me in the inevitable confusion of the ride. After dinner, while I was smoking in my room with Raoul de Vinceaux, Boc entered, and, with a theatrical air, exclaimed:—

"M. Valery, I have to thank you for what you have done for me. I do it without shame before M. de

Vinceaux. Finding myself no longer disturbed by my creditors, I called upon M. Chassepain to learn the reason; he informed me that you were my only creditor—I had only you to deal with. M. Valery, I felt that I would be distrustful to be in other hands than yours; but I understand your intentions, you wish to aid me, to give me time—which I accept willingly. I am not one who feels gratitude burdensome, and I wish to take this opportunity of thanking you openly.”

I cut his thanks short; but he insisted on having me to breakfast with M. de Vinceaux at his house. Raoul, who fears his verses as he does the plague, excused himself on the pretence of urgent business. As to me, I could not refuse Boc without paining him, and I accepted his invitation for the day after.

To-day, Marguerite asked permission of her father to try her horse on the heaths. She did not, she said, wish to appear before everybody as a novice in horsemanship. M. Désormes giving his permission, I escorted my pupil; scarce had we gone one hundred feet, before Mlle. d'Astafort joined us at full gallop. I could not help mentally cursing her.

“Do you think it was right,” said she, drawing rein beside us, “to go without me?”

“Do you think me a child, to be always at my heels?” replied Marguerite, impatiently.

“Ah! we are nervous,” cried Fanny.

“Cousin, I have ridden enough; let us go home.”

“When we have taken home this capricious beauty,” said Mlle. d'Astafort, “ride with me to Dressais. I have some orders to give there, and can return at once.”

“If you have need of a servant, take Dolin,” said Marguerite, dryly.

Mlle. d'Astafort smiled ironically, without answering. As we reached the gate, Marguerite's horse rubbed against Fanny's skirt. Mlle. d'Astafort struck him a violent blow with her whip. The horse kicked and started at full gallop, carrying off Marguerite, yet little accustomed to rapid riding. I rode after and stopped him. Mlle. d'Astafort followed us, and said, laughingly: "It was to give you a *plomb*, Marguerite."

War was declared. The young ladies did not speak the whole day. In the evening, when Marguerite was embroidering, she called me and asked me to read aloud to her a treatise on horsemanship. It was a strange choice for an evening's reading, but she wished to tease Fanny.

"Look," she said, "and see if there is a passage which tells you what you ought to do when your best friend starts your horse with a sudden cut of a whip, without caring whether she breaks your neck or not."

Fanny turned pale. I touched Marguerite's arm. It was very imprudent to make Mlle. d'Astafort angry. She replied bitterly, and Marguerite tried to give a jesting turn to her words.

"Have you not done quarrelling," cried Mme. d'Astafort, who was playing cards with my uncle. "She does not know how to jest; this great Fanny, who ought to be reasonable, is more unreasonable than Margot."

Marguerite took the book from me, quietly pressing my hand, and went to the piano. After singing for an hour, she walked up to Fanny, and embraced her frankly; Fanny only returned the embrace by a slight kiss.

Passing before the statue, I observed on its marble bosom a drop of water, brilliant as a tear. Dolin sprinkles everything, and waters the books under pretext of dusting them.

19th September. I must make a white mark for yesterday. I have not yet recovered from my surprise, and at times believe myself dreaming. It was yesterday that I was to go to St. Aoult, to breakfast with Boc. I found him waiting for me on my step, determined, as he told me, to seek me in my bed, if I forgot my promise.

At the end of a narrow path, bordered by a green hedge, and closed by a gate, stood the little cottage, showing its white gable and green shutters, in the midst of vines reddened by autumn. When we entered, breakfast was ready. The black bread moistened by the poet's tears, was, to-day, flanked by chicken cutlets, and a trout from the Indre, the whole watered by old wine from Issoudun, to which a fat servant helped us liberally; which made me think that it was only in his odes that Boc was dying for love of Fanny d'Astafort.

I had the misfortune to mount him on his poetical hobby by comparing his chambermaid with the nurse of Dressais. He told me that he consoled himself for the disdain of the naughty Diana, with the smiling Hebe, and in relation to this, he went to seek for some sheets of paper, upon which the changes were rung in jingling verses. He then recited several rondeaus and little pieces, a sort of skirmishing, for he threatened me with a poetical lucubration upon which he could not put his hand. This was for dessert, and I bravely resolved to take his poetry, as I took his coffee. His servant asked him what he was looking for.

"The ballad I read you. You know it was dated 1838 or 1839, and was one of my first attempts at romantic poetry."

"Perhaps it is amongst those old papers of your mother's. I made a bundle of them to light the fire. It is in the wood-box, if it is not burned."

She immediately commenced to rummage and spread over the room a cart-load of scribbled paper, old newspapers, notes, receipts, antediluvian parchments, and I don't know what. It was like hunting in the ocean for a grain of sand.

"What a misfortune if it is lost!" exclaimed Boc, sighing, while he scattered the papers around.

A yellow paper, crumpled and folded in four, tied with broken thread, struck against the table. I took it up and mechanically smoothed it out, and recognizing the handwriting of my great-grandfather, Urbain Valery, I glanced at the following words:—

"This is my last will and testament, written to-day, the 7th of September, 1839. I, Urbain Valery, bequeath to my grandson my house, lands, etc."

I read no further: though no lawyer, I nevertheless understood that this paper was of the greatest importance to me. I remembered that old Urbain Valery died the 9th of September, 1839; and if this was his last will, my father had been defrauded by Mr. Désormes. I saw nothing more in this will, saved by the merest chance from Hebe's fire, than the means of obtaining Marguerite's hand. I did not wish to despoil my uncle, but I could now force him to the wall. "M. Boc," I cried, "whence did you obtain this paper?"

"I do not know," he replied, dismally; "my servant upset everything. I cannot find my ballad. I am in

despair. Ah, women! charming, but brainless creatures! Those are not my verses that you have there?"

"No, it is a will of my great-grandfather's."

"How, another will? My mother told me that he amused himself making his will yearly, then monthly, and then every fifteen days."

"I am astonished," I exclaimed, "that Mme. Boc did not send these papers to the heirs."

"Heavens! at M. Valery's death, my mother lost her mind, and almost immediately after was struck down by a paralytic stroke. She never recovered, and finally lost her memory. Most of her papers, which she believed of small value, were put in an old trunk, and I have never thought of making an inventory of them. They are there still, unless my house-keeper has removed them, to make place for linen. Is that paper of any use to you?"

"Indeed it is, and I shall take the liberty of keeping it."

"Certainly you may, and I will examine the rest to see if there are more papers of interest; perhaps I may find my verses."

"Boc," I said, laying before him the documents constituting me his sole creditor, "one present deserves another: you must take back what I offer you—here are your notes." The poet not wishing to receive them, I tore them up. I bid him good-bye and left, without mentioning the immense service he had rendered me. Noble poet, I feared he would choke me with his verses, and he gave me life and happiness.

Wishing to know the exact value of the will, and having small confidence in M. Chassepain, who was acting as Mauvezin's friend, and was also sick at the time, I mounted my horse, and, followed by Kadour,

took the cars to Lignières. I called immediately upon M. Lormond, my grandfather's old notary. He had much trouble in recognizing me.

"How!" said he, crossing his hands upon his paunch, "is this the little Mark? My faith, my young man, I should never have recognized you. How we change! Do you know fourteen years have elapsed since I lost sight of you? But, little by little, I recognize in you your father's features and build—a good heart, but a bad head. I see you are decorated; let me congratulate you. What have you been doing all this time? You must tell me later, while dining with me *sans façon*. In the meantime, tell me what gives me the pleasure of seeing you."

I showed him the will, and begged him to give me his real opinion. First he looked at the date.

"Wait a moment," he exclaimed. "Do you know the date of the will in M. Désormes' favor? Everything is in that."

"Yes," I replied, "I remember it distinctly; it was on the 15th of August—Assumption-day—1839."

"Oh! oh! very good; listen," and he read:—

"This is my last will and testament. To-day, 7th September, 1839, I, Urbane Valery, of my own free will, being sound in mind and body, give and bequeath to my grandson, John Valery, my house at Lignières, gardens and lands; also my estates of *Moulet*, of *Felouze*, the *Brandes*, *la Chatoule* and *Lassout*, with all the appurtenances of these five estates, and their leases, buildings, cultivated lands, fields, vineyards, movables, and immovables, without reserve. The whole is worth twelve hundred thousand francs."

"It is worth more now," said the notary, speaking to himself.

"I give and bequeath to my daughter, Theresa Valery, Mme. Désormes, the estate of *Boiscontent* and that of *Jouannets*, worth two hundred and thirty thousand francs, she having already received, as a marriage-portion, the farms of *Font-Roy* and of *Civrenne*, worth five hundred and seventy thousand francs; which has raised her portion to eight hundred thousand francs. I expect her to be content with this, her legitimate share.'

"Mme. Désormes being dead," said M. Lormond, "her daughter inherits eight hundred thousand francs. With such an inheritance, she can marry whom she pleases. That is all correct," he continued. "I will go on:—

"I give to Rosalie Boc, my housekeeper, a life-interest of three thousand francs.'

"Is Rosalie Boc still living?"

"No."

"In that case, these sixty thousand francs return to you. Let us read on:—

"To Jacques Seisillet, my servant, a life-annuity of twelve hundred francs.'

"He has gone to join his master—a net profit of twenty-four thousand francs.

"This olographic will is to be given to M. Lormond, notary at Lignière, whom I beg to be my executor. I hereby annul and revoke all wills or other dispositions of property.

"This testament was written by my hand, in Lignière, the seventh of September, eighteen hundred and thirty-nine.
JEAN URBAIN VALÉRY.'

"This is perfectly valid," exclaimed M. Lormond; "it lacks nothing; and, for a man of eighty-nine, the

writing is free, and denotes great clearness of mind. I was astonished that your great-grandfather left you nothing. This is something like; where did you find it?"

I told him of my breakfast at Boc's, and his search for a lost poem, and my surprising discovery.

"This proves that Rosalie Boc lost her mind when her old master died. She never had much, and her son inherits her intellectual weakness, for I hear that he is a rhymist. Never mind, here you are, the master of nearly thirteen hundred thousand francs—a pretty plum for a lieutenant of spahis. Father Désormes will wince, but he may as well yield gracefully; and though paying you will make a big hole in his three millions, he can survive it. St. Jean is his own, and is worth twelve hundred thousand francs. Take my advice, and make a family affair of it by marrying his daughter, so that everything will go off well."

"Do you think so?"

"I am convinced; Désormes loves money."

"But he has promised Marguerite's hand to de Mauvezin."

"To that fair, portionless youth? You surprise me. But, nonsense! give me full power, and I will arrange the marriage for you in a fortnight."

I intrusted to him my interests of heart and pocket.

"To-morrow I will go to Ardenes and confer with M. Chassepain, Désormes' notary. I must warn you that we have no claim upon Désormes for the fourteen years' back rents. Not having concealed the will, he acted in good faith, and the revenues belong to him. Say nothing to any one yet; for the rest, I will take charge of all; I will keep you advised, and shall soon see."

We went to dinner. He introduced me to his wife, and showed me his twin daughters; their resemblance to each other was so perfect that I could not have told them apart. This made me think of those who deny the reappearance of the same souls under forms similar to those which they had borne in preceding existences. Here, nevertheless, nature spontaneously created two types, a perfect repetition of one another.

M. Lormond and his wife are excellent, easy people. I returned late to St. Jean. My poor horse was tired. Everybody slept. This day of excitement and emotion agitated me so much that I passed a very bad night. I had scarcely fallen asleep, when I heard a sigh near me. I awoke suddenly, and immediately believed that I had been dreaming, when a second sigh, more distinct, more plaintive than the first, struck upon my senses, banishing all uncertainty; it seemed to come from the library.

The parlor clock struck three. I went to assure myself that no dog had accidentally entered the adjoining rooms. It was perhaps an acoustical effect—a fissure in the wall, that brought a sound from the outside, or the snoring of some neighbor. .

20th September. I had no chance to-day of speaking alone to Marguerite, and I ought not to tell her anything until authorized by M. Lormond. There is no certainty, and I have promised. And, moreover, can Marguerite hide her joy and her hopes? I have so much trouble in concealing mine! I was very polite to Fanny. I played my part with a light heart, as I fear her no more.

Will my uncle recall his promise to de Mauvezin? He must, my God; that is, if I do not dream when awake.

21st September. Dolin entered my room with a mysterious air, saying: "Excuse me, M. Mark, but I must speak to you of something which torments me. You are wise; you have travelled, and may be able to help me out of my distress. Monsieur, have you ever looked into the eyes of the statue?"

"No, what is the matter with them?"

"Well, monsieur, they have—they have—a trick of following you wherever you move in the room. It is like M. Désormes' picture in the parlor, the eyes of which never leave me while I am sweeping, and seem to say, 'Take care of yourself, if you leave dust upon the furniture.' And when he comes in angry, I say to myself, 'there, he has the eyes of the picture.' The eyes of the statue have a *charm*, and you shall see it. The morning of the day that I killed M. Michel, I found this stone girl so nice, that I stood staring at her with pleasure. Her eyes were like life, and drew me towards her, when I suddenly saw myself shining in them, but very small, together with the room, windows, books, curiosities, vases; in short, everything. Then, by still looking, I saw myself on the heath, driving a carriage containing two gentlemen; a marsh appeared, and father Carnat's dog was scratching the earth and watching me. Have you ever noticed that dog?"

"No! Go on."

"Well, that dog is not a dog."

"It is a slut, then."

"No, monsieur! It bears the shape of a dog, but it is not one. You know that animals return upon earth. The proof is, that, one night, mother Fraudy heard her goat, which she had buried in the morning, bleating at the stable-door. The animal wished to

join its mates, whom it heard bleating, and answered them. Mother Fraudy got up, to see if anything was to be seen, but she saw nothing, though she knew that it was her dead goat that had come back. You must not laugh, M. Mark. A black dog used to appear upon the edge of the field *de la Morte*. Father Bon-temps took it home one night, and put it in his stable; when he got up at daylight, he saw that it was father Carnat's dog, which had stolen out alone to run over the heaths. How could he have opened the door, if the devil is not in his skin?"

"My poor Dolin, you dreamed all this; there are neither sorcerers, nor visitors from the other world, nor devils."

"That may be, monsieur! that may be! nevertheless, since that statue has been in the château, strange things have come to pass. But I will tell you all. As usual, I went to Issoudun, to execute commissions and to buy provisions for the week. I brought back a crowd, such as I had never brought before. There were Mme. and Mlle. d'Astafort and their servants, you and the Orabe, that makes five, without counting all the gentlemen who come and go, and don't live on clear water. It was there that I met M. Pillepuce, he, you know, upon whom the statue cast a charm which paralyzed his arm."

"Paralyzed!"

"Yes, monsieur; for, since that day, he has never been able to use it. Well, on seeing me, he called me, and commenced asking after every one, and to talk. Ah, how beautiful he talked, and talked, and talked! and I understood nothing. At length, I asked, *point-blanc*, if I could not get him a small piece of the statue,

a finger at least. He offered me ten good francs for one finger. I refused, saying, I had found no pieces of the statue. 'You are a fool,' he replied; 'with one blow of your duster, in dusting, you could break off the end of the nose, or a finger, and earn twenty francs. Such an awkward blow might even gain you forty francs.'

"I hesitated, and was just about to answer, 'That may be' but—I dared not; and then he offered me fifty francs. My faith, I agreed to it, and promised him to do as he wanted, next week. I came back, determined to earn the money. Shame overcame me, and I dared not; for eight days I hung around the statue, without courage to look at it. On the morning you took breakfast at M. Boc's, there was nobody in the parlor, nor in the library; I pluck up courage; I go to the statue; but I meet the eyes, and I am stuck to the spot, like a bird charmed by a snake. Suddenly, as I looked, the breast heaved, as if to draw breath, and I heard a deep sigh, such as a person will give who gets a piece of bad news. What I tell you, M. Mark, is the truth. I did not dream it, because it was in broad daylight."

I recalled to mind the sigh, which I also had heard. Whether Dolin's impressions were real or imaginary, I was determined to inspire him with so salutary a fear of the statue, that nothing would induce him to meddle with it. I assured him, gravely, that it had the power of sight and hearing.

"I wished," I continued, solemnly, "to hide this from you, but as you have discovered it, learn all. The statue is a fairy. You ought to rejoice that she did not turn you to stone as you stood. I not only

advise you to refrain from injuring her yourself, but to prevent others from touching her. If any harm happens to her, she will be the death and ruin of everybody here, commencing with you."

"Ah!" said Dolin, "thank heaven! You are talking reason now; I knew she was a fairy."

I gave him the fifty francs offered by M. Pillepuce, which drew from him the most humble thanks. The varlet is avaricious. I promised him a liberal reward if he should guard the statue well.

"Don't be afraid; no one cares to touch it. I like money; but you might give me one hundred good francs, and I wouldn't put my hand even on the *pedes-table*. You must have some power over her, to have drawn her from her hole without being killed. Fraudy, who carried her upon his handbarrow, had a bleeding of the lungs the next day, and if your Orabe were not a child of the devil, he would also have caught some lameness."

M. Pillepuce is certainly a dangerous monomaniac; but this fool Dolin, with his dumb beasts returned to life, without knowing it, touches upon a philosophical question long denied by human pride—whether the beasts of the field have souls. Does man believe, then, that he is the only being enjoying the privilege of reason, intellect, memory? When he is forced to recognize these faculties in the brute creation, he calls them *instinct*. A soul is accorded to the *cretins* of Valais, living like brutes, not capable of remembrance, scarce of speech, and it is refused to the dog, who has friendships and hatreds, who can remember and dream! The peasant does not hesitate to recognize in the animal creation the power to wander upon the earth in spirit. He says, in speaking of a spectre, "It is a

troubled soul!" and, in speaking of an animal, "*It is the spirit of a dead animal!*" though he refuses to accord him a soul during life. There is in this, without his knowing it, a strange metaphysical subtlety.

22d September. Last night I was suddenly awakened; it seemed as if some one entered my room. I listened attentively, and thought I heard breathing. My heart beat violently; I was bathed in cold sweat, and had an indescribable fear. Yet there was no one near me. It was a sort of nightmare. I opened the window; it was cold. The dark foliage of the trees in the park stood out in relief against the heavens, brilliant with stars. Sirius sparkled like a diamond; the owls uttered their plaintive note, and the weathercock over the *donjon* creaked at the least breath of air. This calm night, this stillness of sleeping nature, threw me into a reverie, and my reveries always carry my thoughts towards Marguerite. I was leaning on the window-sill, my eyes staring into the darkness, yet seeing nothing. Suddenly I believed I felt some one behind me. At the moment, my nerves were so excited, that I was confused, and dared not even move, until a positive rustle made me start around: there was nothing—perhaps some dried leaves, shaken by a passing breeze, under my window.

I tried to sleep; but all that had impressed me during the day was reproduced in fatiguing dreams. Fanny, draped and posed as the statue, was before me. M. Pillepuce broke off, one after the other, all of her fingers, and Fanny showed her mutilated hand to Mauvezin, who laughed like a fool. Then it was no longer Fanny, it was the statue itself, which, with animated face, and endowed with the power of motion, came to beg me for vengeance. I then saw father

Carnat's dog trying to drag a heavy load from the morass: it was M. Michel. The engineer struck with his geological hammer upon the statue. I heard the arm and marble head of my beautiful nymph fall on the floor; her mutilated body descended from the velvet pedestal, and came towards my bed. I was awake, but the dream continued. I had left my door open, and I heard some one walking in the library. For a moment I was foolish enough to think that it was a woman. Fanny perhaps was there; but I dismissed the idea. I held my breath, I listened for the least sound, when I heard the library floor creak. I had no more doubts; some one was there. A soft, full voice repeated my name twice, low, but very distinctly, "Mark! Mark!"

I rubbed a dozen matches, before being able to light my taper. I searched my room, and then the library. There was no one; the statue remained immovable in its place, the door opening into the parlor was fastened on the inside. It is a trick which some one has played me, or another mental hallucination, I thought. Unwilling to yield to these nervous spells, I dressed myself, and opened the library window. It was daylight. The statue looked enchanting, beautiful, gilded by the first rays of the sun. She glistened with a lustre I had never before observed; and looked as Venus must have looked, rising from the waves, covered with silver drops of water, glittering like pearls on her snowy bosom. She was, in fact, covered with vapor, arising doubtless from the heat of the apartment; one would have thought she was perspiring. I approached, to wipe her, and found the marble warm to the touch. I shall tell Master Dolin to make less fire in the room; the heat has affected my

head, and has doubtless been the only cause of my idle fancies.

23d September. To-day I received a letter from M. Lormond, begging me yet to keep silent in relation to the discovery of the will; but he confirmed his first decision that the document is valid and indisputable. I took it upon myself to confide the secret to Marguerite. I could no longer see her in quietude without striving to calm her. She was delighted, but warned me not to be in haste to speak to her father, for fear of irritating him against me, and causing him to hurry on his arrangements with Mauvezin.

"He thinks more and more of the title," said she, "and God knows if, in his present mood, he would not prefer it to money. M. Lormond is right, the news must be carefully communicated, and the match adroitly hinted at."

With hope to support me, I can bear anything. I am not perfectly contented in mind, but when I compare my present feelings with those I experienced on my arrival, I am inclined to fatalism, and to the belief that I am predestined to the greatest happiness or the deepest misfortune.

Dear Marguerite! how different she is from those around her! Rank, wealth, pleasure, are nothing in her eyes; she lives and cares but for me. Fanny treats me stiffly and coldly; she seems to be angry. I do not seek for an explanation with her. I no longer fear her; I wonder what it means. We shall see.

Dr. Thibaul, Boc, and de Vinceaux dined with us. Mme. d'Astafort has already seized upon them to play cards. Marguerite proposed to us to leave the cards, and vary our amusements. She had a whim to play

charades, and was anxious to gratify it. We were divided into two parties. The library was to be the dressing and green-room for the actors. All the fancy garments in the house were put into requisition. Even Mme. d'Astafort's wardrobe was not respected by the doctor, who, called upon to play the part of a fat sultan, was smothered up in the flowering *peignoir* and false hair of the dear lady. On seeing him appear, she would have torn off his spoils, had she not feared to injure her things; but she would not allow him to speak one word. The doctor avenged himself by giving up his part to her, and retaining her treasures. She played it in the most ridiculous manner. Everything, however, in our entertainment was not a burlesque. Fanny wished to represent an Olympian goddess. Her costume was not of any particular era or country, but was tasteful and original, and imparted to her a severe and striking beauty. Enveloped thus in white draperies, she recalled my recent dream, in which she had appeared to my troubled imagination, confounded with the statue. Marguerite, in another rôle, was no less successful than her friend. She took the part of a shepherdess of the heaths, and imitated the language, the coquetry, and even the songs of the peasants, with surprising accuracy and rare talent. This drew upon her an epigram from Fanny—Juno.

"You play the shepherdess to the life," said she. "It can be seen you are of the race."

"Oh, well," replied M. Désormes, drawing himself up with pride, "your mother did not spring from Jupiter's thigh any more than mine."

Mme. d'Astafort, who has the habit of saying the *cuisse de jubilé*, had Jupiter's name repealed, and

cried out that "M. Désormes had always some coarseness in his mouth."

Dolin is always meddling. Dish in hand, he had stood at the door during the performance, and now entered and familiarly complimented his young mistress, saying:—

"I should swear I saw the little Marlot! you look so much like her and speak as foolish."

"Thank you, Dolin," replied Marguerite; "she is the belle of the country, and I should be delighted to resemble her."

"Oh! Nanniche is better looking," he answered, "than Marlot, and much fatter."

The charades lasted till midnight; then Marguerite and Fanny robbed the larder, and improvised a nice little supper in the parlor. The doctor and my uncle gave us the slip.

Marguerite, whom I had told of poor Boc's precarious finances, found an ingenious way of aiding him temporarily, without wounding his pride. While we were supping, we spoke of our frequent discoveries of ancient coins.

"*Apropos*," said she, drawing a purse from her pocket, "here are some, found to-day in an old wall. There are fifty louis of the last century; my father gave them to me for my collection; they are of small value."

"Eh! but they are valuable," cried Mme. d'Astafort. "You can change them for new gold, and buy a handsome dress or bracelet, Margot."

"I have no need for either," replied Marguerite, "and wish to make a lottery of them, or else—"

"Or else play for them," continued Mme. d'Astafort.

"Oh! we have played enough," said Fanny, who

was in Marguerite's confidence; "let us make a prize of them."

"That's the idea," cried Marguerite, "but not a prize of virtue; every one could not try for it. A prize of poetry, the same as the floral games; but we wish the trial at once, and that the verses be an improvisation. I will preside, and here are my flowers," added she, throwing on a silver dish the old louis, which she had disinterred from some corner of her father's strong box, and replaced by her slender savings.

The bargain was accepted. Mme. d'Astafort, certain that Fanny would win, approved Margot's idea; but Fanny seconded her friend's intentions; she commenced some verses, sufficiently well put together for improvisation, and broke down in the middle, pretending that she lacked ideas.

De Vinceaux declared he had never in his life composed but two lines, in which *onion* rhymed with *opinion*.

Boc commenced like a man certain of success, and though he halted, was overwhelmed with applause, and declared victor by the new Clemence Isaure. She unfastened from her head the chaplet with which it had been adorned for the charades, and crowned Boc while she presented him the louis.

He could not refuse her present, and, though deeply moved, had the good sense only to show his gratitude by silence. We continued to laugh and chat till two in the morning.

Not being sleepy, I stayed alone in the parlor, and, lighting a cigar, stretched myself upon the sofa to dream.

Everything in the large room was in disorder. The

chairs looked as if holding a grave consultation around the remains of the supper. Here a costume spread out, there a ribbon; the room looked like a battle-field. A candle threw a red gleam through the heated atmosphere, by setting its paper ornament on fire. A cricket, emboldened by the silence, commenced his song in the warm ashes. The wind seemed to whistle through the locks with a mournful cadence. The little spirits of night seemed weeping and sighing at the door. They wished to enter and play in the thick folds of the curtains, glide along the walls, peep laughingly into the mirrors, and revel on the crumbs of the supper. The dogs howled so persistently, that I opened the window to look out. There was nothing but the moon rising red and large from behind a curtain of poplars, whose straight twigs seemed to cut it into a dozen parts.

What do the dogs think of the moon, to chant her their plaintive hymns; why their howls of despair or terror? Is it homage rendered to the mysterious planet? If dogs *would* speak, as father Carnat says they can, they would make revelations! Strange fantasy, to imagine that beliefs abandoned by men become the property of animals. What an idea! But what is an idea? A divine reminiscence—

A sharp noise from the library startled me. I hastened thither; it was a glass shade that the expiring flame of a taper had burst.

By the vacillating light, I saw the arms, fingers, and neck of the statue ornamented with bracelets, rings, and ancient necklaces. "Good," I exclaimed, "they had to amuse themselves with it, as if it were a doll. Who the devil had the fancy to search the cases and ornaments in this style? And the golden diadem!

There is nothing wanting to the toilet. They will end by breaking it, with their folly! It must have been Fanny's or Marguerite's work; but Marguerite told me she feared those enamel eyes. How brilliant they are to-night, and how well chosen and becoming the ornaments! One would say that she was in love with her own splendor; she looks smiling as if wishing to dispute the prize of beauty.

September 24. Without feeling sick, I am a prey to the most extraordinary and disquieting phenomena—but why disquieting? Cadanet! Cadanet! if you were here, you would tell me that I am mad. My mind, without being perfectly calm, is less gloomy than it has been for many a day. The past spreads itself before me like a book. The life of the mind is not what we believe it to be. It is a profound, perhaps sublime mystery, grander and deeper than is generally believed.

The past night has been something more than a hallucination. It was a revelation—a dream, doubtless; but also a remembrance of the soul, a reproduction of past events.

Some being approached my bed and breathed upon my forehead; a soft, caressing voice spoke to me in a foreign idiom, which I recognized to be the Oscan; an ancient tongue I have vainly sought a thousand times to decipher, but which in my dream I understood perfectly.

"*Markek Waldrigh*," said the voice, "why will you not know me? Am I not always your wife, your devoted slave? Have you forgotten your Callirhoé? It is not possible that you have ceased to love me! Ever faithful to you, ever loving you, I recognized you the instant you entered the tomb; but where have you

been, that you delayed so long recalling me to life? It would have been better to let me sleep forever, than to awaken me to feel your indifference. Do you remember our oaths—yours and mine—graven upon the tablet of bronze?

‘Before the God Cabires
Marke and Callirhoé,
Living or dead,
Are sworn to
An eternal love!’

Do you remember the delicious hours passed beneath the foliage bowers of my garden, in the noble trees of the forests where the game abounded? But why is all so changed here? In the place of villas and palaces, I see but deserted moors. Wherefore am I surrounded by these common utensils? Wherefore these vases of clay in my bower? Wherefore are implements of war belonging to your ancestors mingled with my jewels? Why do you no longer wear brilliant arms and rich robes? Why have you left me dressed in a wretched tunic? I am cold, oh so very cold, in my robes of stones! I know that I have slept for long ages, but now I am returned to you to recall the past. Without your love I cannot be restored to life, and you do not believe, you do not seem to understand me. And yet I have only told you the truth. Look at me! Oh, unhappy me! you love me no longer. Marke! remember, remember!”

I felt burning kisses and tears upon my hands. I made useless efforts to wake, or at least to open my eyes, but I was bound to my bed by an invincible force. I heard steps in my chamber, a distant door closing with creaking sound, and then a blow upon my hall-door.

"What is the matter?" cried M. Desormes' voice.

I started at length from my heavy sleep and opened the door. Had I wept in dreaming, my hands were so wet?

"What the devil are you at in here? Are you reciting Greek poetry? I heard you as I passed, and was uneasy."

"What o'clock is it?" I asked.

"Five; but how strange your face looks, are you sick?"

"No, I do not think so; I slept and had the nightmare."

I arose and accompanied my uncle, who was going to oversee some workmen digging an irrigating canal near the farm of Corbilly. Walking along, I repeated my dream, of which I retained a remembrance as clear as the dream itself had been. My uncle was not at all disturbed.

"Bah!" he replied, "I often dream also, and sometimes of very wonderful things. I often dream that I see the lucerne in bloom in January, and that is always a sign for me of a good harvest. You have read a history of this part of the country, and your former studies of the dead languages have mingled with it, as always happens in dreams."

"But the tears upon my hands?"

"Bah! you were hot, that is all. You surely do not wish to persuade yourself that your dream was ever a reality."

While watching the diggers, I observed a piece of metal thrown aside. Picking it up and studying the characters engraven, I saw they were Oscan.

"It is Oscan," I cried. "But, alas! I cannot decipher it." Suddenly, like a flash, my mind was en-

lightened by some remembrance, and I read and translated—

“‘Before the gods Cabires,
Markek and Callirhoé—’”

The rest was wanting; but here was the beginning of the vow breathed in my ear the past night. I told my amazement to my uncle.

“Bah! that means something else,” answered the incredulous old man. “But you speak of *oaths* and *eternal love*; there is no connection of that kind here. That is the tablet of a tomb built by some husband to his wife.”

“The other half must be sought,” I exclaimed, eagerly; “see, the workmen are throwing out stones and brick; there must have been some ancient building here.”

But they found nothing more.

I still felt certain that the other half of the tablet was near, and I made the workmen search. Suddenly one of their pickaxes struck upon metal—the missing half was found.

“Here it is, uncle,” I said—

“‘Are sworn to
An eternal love.’”

“You knew that before, Mark; you have found the idea in my library, and amuse yourself playing sorcerer.”

“Everything is not to be found in your library, uncle.”

“Well, I am going there now, and will make them carry this tablet.”

“These writings,” whispered a workman, “are contracts with the devil.”

"Fool," replied his wiser neighbor, "do you not see that bronze was the paper of the ancients?"

The inscription was hung upon the walls of the library. M. Désormes was in good spirits. He approached the statue, and bowing politely, he said:—

"Here, beautiful lady, is all that remains of your love vows. This will recall your happy days, will it not? You have a lively little face, and a pair of eyes that must have made more than one conquest."

That evening my uncle, laughingly, told the young ladies that I was a sorcerer, and could teach father Carnat. Marguerite only saw in my double sight the result of scientific research. I was as pleased as she not to believe myself subject to hallucinations; but one day perhaps, Marguerite, who is sincere and intelligent, will come to know me better and will understand me.

25th September. It poured with rain, and the bad weather promising to last all day, kept us around the library fire. The conversation turned upon the antiquities recently found at St. Jean. Each one made a conjecture as to the inscription on the bronze plate, and the union of the Greek name Callirhoé with the Celtic name of Markek, signifying cavalier. Why were the vows of a Gallic noble and a young Etruscan damsel expressed in the Oscan tongue, and how is it that they were found in the heaths of Berry?

There must necessarily have existed a Phœnician or Oscan city at St. Jean. This locality has been inhabited, cultivated, worked from the earliest historic time. The tumule so common in this part of Berry, the hypogeum of the field *de la Morte*, the supposed Roman camps, the Gallic fortresses of Brives and Corny, are positive proofs.

"That does not explain," said Marguerite, "who Markek and Callirhoé really were; a loving couple of antiquity perhaps, but of what epoch?"

I replied, that the painting of the hypogeum, the statue, doubtless the image of this lady, and other relics found, made me fix the era of the existence of our two heroes four centuries before Christ.

"The Gauls were barbarians in those days," remarked Fanny.

"It is true," I replied, "that Greek customs had not yet penetrated into the great forests of Gaul; but the Celts had a social system, laws, cities, and roads long before their conquest by Julius Cæsar. Do you believe that their constant raids into Italy only enriched them with booty, and that they did not bring back some idea of improvement? I was very foolish to rack my brains to know by what prodigy we found ourselves here, surrounded by the remains of an advanced civilization. Following the beaten route, I had endeavored to find in these relics the monuments of Roman domination in Gaul, whilst we really had found trophies of the conquests of the Gauls in Italy; truly glorious conquests, made long before the time of Julius Cæsar. Yes, yes!" I exclaimed, "while I think, all is clear. I understand who Markek was, and I no longer see in Callirhoé a Druidess, but some priestess of a strange faith; perhaps one who, after having been brought hither a captive, became a queen in this place—who knows? perhaps the first *châtelaine* of the estate we live upon."

"Oh, oh!" exclaimed my uncle, "St. Jean may have been the golden palace of Carnat's legend."

"Why not?" asked Marguerite. "Mark, search your books."

"My books tell nothing, and I can only build up this history by induction." I dared not add, by remembrance.

Marguerite seemed to understand me.

"Seek, seek to build it," she cried.

"Seek, and you will find," added Mme. d'Astafort.

"If you can't find, you can invent, which will be as good," continued Fanny.

Overcome by these demands, I felt myself seized with heaviness of the head, and for a moment I thought I had been taken ill; but under Marguerite's clear and penetrating glance the sudden weakness passed away as if by enchantment, and it seemed to me that I saw my way clearly to the truth.

"You wish it," I remarked to my auditors. "I will try; if I bore you, stop me."

"No, no!" answered my uncle; "as it relates to my property, I am interested. I have often dreamed that I had found in the heath wells filled with gold and silver."

"And I," said Marguerite, "I shall dream of Callirhoé until I know her history."

CADANET'S NOTE.

The history here presented, though told with the rapidity of improvisation, and as rapidly jotted down by Mark in his journal, appeared to me too long to be related in the middle of the history of the events of his life, and I had determined to place it at the end. But Mark assured me that all the incidents that followed were directly connected with this fatal history of Callirhoé, and that it would be impossible to displace it without leaving unexplained the dreadful consequences it had upon his mind and actions. It was

at St. Jean, the 25th of September, 1852, that Mark related to his family, and the ladies d'Astafort, the following story (at least such is the date I find assigned to it in his journal):—

“Two thousand two hundred and forty years will have elapsed,” I said, “on the first of May. Markek was on horseback in the midst of the vast heaths which environ us. The sun, high in the heavens, fell full upon the flowering broom and heather. Two large shaggy dogs, with bloodshot eyes and jaws eager for carnage, ran before him. The long iron spikes in their brass collars glistened in the sun like stars. One is called Dhu (black), the other Tan (fire). Markek is dressed in a red military cloak of deer skin; a large thick leathern baldrick, embossed with golden ornaments in relief, supports his long Iberian-bladed sword, with gold and coral hilt. His low brazen helmet, without visor, is surmounted by two wings of the same metal frosted with silver. A collar of gold is the insignia of his rank as knight; bracelets ornament his arms and wrists; his shoes, resembling moccasins, are fastened to his embroidered deer-skin breeches by leathern straps laced around his legs. To the bow of his bear-skin saddle hangs a cutlass and another axe of brass, the handle inlaid with tin. His iron-gray horse shakes the sonorous ornaments of his bridle and stamps with impatient feet the soil of the heaths which border the great forest of *d'Ar-Denan* (Ardentes).

“Behind Markek, on a white mare, trots his squire Kad-Wir, that is to say, the quarrelsome, a Celtic name, perhaps pronounced *Kadour*. Dressed in skin, with iron head-piece, he carries his master's large tri-

angular shield, the device of which is a black horse painted on a red ground, and his lance ornamented with the bell, the sound of which announces to an enemy the approach of a warrior who holds *ruses* and ambuscades in contempt. In a cloud of dust some fifty feet in the rear, drawn by oxen, come the baggage-wagons and the chariots which always accompanied the foot-soldiers and horsemen of my clan."

"Ha!" said M. Désormes, interrupting me, "your clan! You were there, then!"

"Yes, certainly," answered Marguerite; "Markek, that was you, was it not, Mark?"

"Did I say that it was I? I do not believe, but only ask you to think that it was."

"That would be so good," said Fanny, sneeringly.

"If you interrupt him," continued Marguerite, impatiently, "he will remember no more. Go on, Mark."

Marguerite seemed so convinced in regard to these reminiscences of my soul, that I abandoned myself to a kind of feverish enthusiasm. By degrees I lost consciousness of time and place; facts crowded upon me, and repeated themselves as I saw them. Dreams, fantasies, or positive recollection of anterior existence, they became for me realities, certainties.

"'Markek,' said my squire, 'if we find the foreign traders, I will try to make a better trade than last year's, when I remember having sold them fifty beaver-skins for two jars of Greek wine. I am sorry for it now. The profits of my chase are gone, and the wine is drunk.'"

"'Was it not at least good, toper?'"

"'I never drank better, and if he had more—but they are sharper than I am, and I shall be taken in

again. I have in the wagons there twenty-five otter-skins, and I have for a long time wanted a steel-bladed knife; but these little black frizzle-headed men would swallow one armed! You must watch them when they pay you money! To hear them, we only bring them dog-skins; and when they weigh our ingots of brass and lead, they steal the half. If you will listen to me, you will ask high for your goods.'

"That is your business. I am not going to *Uasel-Dun* (the high mountain, Issoudun) only to assist at the feast of the Sun-God, the glorious Belenos, the dispeller of the fogs and snows of winter, but to elect a new *brenn*.'

"So am I; nevertheless, if the Phœnician traders are there, I do not intend to return to Ar-Denan, without having made a good bargain.'

"While conversing with my squire I came in sight of the city, crowded since the evening before. Tents, snowy as swans in the sun, were spread on the borders of the sombre forest. The plain was filled with people: cavaliers, freedmen, traders, women, children, horses, beasts of burden, troops, chariots went and came, crossing each other on all sides. The piercing notes of the great war-trumpets and brass instruments answered the bellowing of oxen, the bleating of sheep, the barking of dogs, and the neighing of horses. Entire tribes arrived, with music in advance, and banners flying. My horsemen and escort having joined me under a clump of tall oaks, I planted my ensign in the ground, to mark my encampment, and while the men occupied themselves in hanging skins upon long rods, or in building huts of boughs around the vehicles and animals crowded into the centre of this improvised village, I went to look for my friends. Pushed by

one, elbowed by another, in the noisy crowd I met Kad-Aneith (the son of combat).

"The whole Druidical college is met to elect a new chief for the clans of the canton," said he. "Our *brenn* Stor-Can (the white vulture) has been killed by Bolg-Righ (the valiant chief)."

"Is it not Bolg-Righ that we wished to elect?"

"Precisely; but, as he has unintentionally killed his brother in arms, his *saldune*, whom he has sworn never to forsake, either in life or in death, he wishes to die. Dhu-Lug (the black crow) has already presented himself as a candidate; but as he is not acceptable, we have chosen you; will you accept?"

"If you judge me worthy of command, name me; I am ready, arms in hand, to sustain my election."

"While we were discussing the subject, a group of foreign traders approached and disturbed us by their cries and offers. Some played upon flutes, to attract purchasers; others exposed their goods, and deafened us by their lying talk. The first who separated himself from the group and approached us was a little man with a red skin, prominent nose, and small, quick-glancing black eyes; his crisp hair hung from under a soft hat, which took the exact shape of his head. His thick shoulders and big arms are out of proportion with his bust and slim legs. He is dressed in short yellow tunic, hardly reaching to his belt; his tight breeches of the same color are slanted upon the sides of the legs. He flashes before us collars and materials brilliant as metal, and soft to the touch as the cheek of a virgin.

"Noblemen," he says, in slow nasal tones, clipping the words of our tongue, and bending low before us like a slave, "have you not brought from

your territories trophies of the chase, that I do not see you offering to traffic with us for these beautiful articles?’

“The little man bearded to the eyes winks at me with a malicious air, distends his huge mouth in an attempt to smile, while he clashes in our ears his necklaces of amber and coral.

“‘How many wild bull skins do you want for your necklace of sweet-smelling yellow stones?’ asks Kad-Aneith.

“‘One thousand,’ answers the trader.

“‘A thousand? I would sooner crack your pate with my club,’ cries my friend, raising his arm over the little man, who, without changing countenance, replies: ‘I said, a thousand for the two collars.’

“The Gaul accepts, and leads the trader towards his wagons.

“Another trader, taller, older, and wealthier in appearance than the first, now advances towards us. He is dressed in long orange-colored tunic, with diamond-shaped spots, fastened at the waist by a broad black belt, and shod with boots of yellow leather, of which the toes are bent upward, and crowned with a tall red cap. He is followed by two slaves, one carrying his mantle, the other his sunshade.

“‘If any among you warriors have brass, tin, or lead to sell or exchange, he may address himself to Mulkar, of Cartha-Hadda (the new city of Carthage). He is here; it is I.’

“‘I have a great deal,’ replies Dun-Glan (soul of the mountain); if you will come to my house, we can trade while we eat together.’

“The stranger accepts. Kad-Aneith, tricked out in his beautiful new collars, has come to rejoin us with

the trafficking little Phœnician. Dun-Glan, chief of the wealthy clan upon whose land we are standing, likewise invites them, and we all accompany him to his house in the centre of the city. His house is round, with thatched roof, high and pointed, and is surrounded, as well as his harvest-barns, stables, mews, cellars, and quarters for the laborers and servants, with a strong palisade and deep ditch. The reception-room is decorated with weapons of war and trophies of the chase. We find a repast ready, spread upon a round table. Dun-Glan places me in the seat of honor, indicated by a large brass cup, between himself and his young wife Hénora, a beautiful brunetta of slightly masculine form and richly dressed.

"Boar hams, a roast deer, trout from the Thiols (the abundant), wheat bread, corn cooked with milk, and angelica sweetened with honey, compose the repast. Our first hunger appeased, the deep cup full of red wine passes from hand to hand, and the squires come and place themselves at the table.

"As our brains become heated with wine, Dun-Glan opens an oak chest, inlaid with tin, and draws forth several human skulls.

"'Is it the custom in the country of my guest,' he says, addressing the traders, 'to preserve the heads of enemies?'

"'No,' replies the oldest, 'the custom is barbarous, and the exploits of our warriors are recorded in books, and represented on monuments, and have no need of such palpable proofs.'

"'Here are my books, and my titles of glory,' continues Dun-Glan, displaying a head carefully dried and embalmed. 'You all knew Ebol-Redia-Righ (the chief horse-breaker), a brave warrior of the Cambions

Glan, chief (les Marchois). We quarrelled at a hunt about our dogs. He gave me the lie. We fought, and I killed him.'

"*'Her! her,'* cry all the convives, applauding. Each in turn vaunted his deeds.

"The little merchant took up the conversation, and, more eager to listen to the words of the strangers than to sing our own praises, we became silent.

"I am of Phœnician origin,' he commenced, 'and long before my country was ravaged by the Assyrians, our laws already forbade us to take justice into our own hands. If any contradicted or gave offence, you took heed of it by carrying your complaint before a magistrate. If you had justice on your side, your adversary was condemned to pay you a fine for damages proportionate to the injury done.'

"That is a strange country,' remarked Kad-Aneith. 'I prefer righting my wrongs with my battle-axe.'

"This causes a burst of boisterous laughter. Dun-Glan, heated by wine, apostrophizes the skull of the enemy he had killed.

"Ebol-Redia-Righ, you would have had to pay me, in that country, a sum greater than is to be found upon the earth, so deeply did you wound my pride; but I prefer your life.'

"He struck the unconscious face.

"Warriors! do you not see that the head of Ebol-Redia-Righ spits in Dun-Glan's face?' cries Kad-Aneith.

"You are drunk,' roars Dun-Glan.

"Kad-Aneith starts up, draws his sword, and staggers towards his host, who awaits him, weapon in hand. The chieftains attack each other with fury. Kad-Aneith receives a wound in the face before we

'can separate them. Hénora seizes her husband with one hand, and strikes him sharply with her distaff, while reproaching him for his uncouth violence towards a guest. Dun-Glan, sobered by the sight of blood, advances towards his foeman, who was bathing his wound, and extends his hand, saying:—

“‘You are my guest. I ought not to have forgotten it. I was wrong; forgive me.’

“‘No, it is I who was wrong,’ answers Kad-Aneith, pressing the offered hand, ‘or rather, it was your old wine of Uasel-Dun. You cut my cheek; you did right; let us speak no more about it.’

“He turned towards the strangers:—

“‘If the brawl you have witnessed had taken place in your country, what would be the punishment of a warrior who should raise his hand against his host?’

“‘The judges would be at a loss how to treat him,’ replied the old Carthaginian, ‘because such a thing could never have occurred. You think all nations are like you. O Gauls! you are but children, and I am amazed that your ancestors, who carried their victorious arms to the ends of the earth, did not bring back from contact with civilized nations the germs of gentler manners.’

“‘My great-grandfather, Belt-Righ (the red chief), never returned from behind the mountains,’ replied I. ‘My grandfather All-Bro-Righ (chief of the high lands), fought the Kimri, and left me their locks. My father, Tarw-Dru (swift bull), married the daughter of their chief Ukel-Our (big man), and made peace with them, because our priest, like you, had said, “they are sons of Gallach; unite, you are all children of the same country.” I, Markek, have not yet performed any action of note.’

“‘Youthful *Klan-Kinnidle*’ (chief of clan), replied the Carthaginian trader, ‘you must cross the snow-capped mountains (Alps). Beyond them is a country where the corn and the vine grow without culture, where the poorest dwellings are rich marble and porphyry palaces filled with gold, and a wealth of which in your ignorance you can form no conception. There, in the midst of shady groves, beneath trees burdened with delicious fruit, to the soft murmur of waters falling into basins formed of precious stones, to the sweet sound of Lydian lutes, sleep the loveliest maidens, lightly clad in garments of purple and silk. Life there is but a succession of splendid pleasures, sumptuous banquets, and voluptuous nights. There glory is to be gained and enemies are to be conquered; for the warriors with shining arms, who fight for their country’s honor, are brave and terrible. That country is Etruria! Those of your ancestors who went thither always returned rich and glorious.’

“‘Have you some quarrel to avenge, that you strive to incite us to make war upon your brethren?’ I asked.

“‘They are not our brethren, but our enemies. We find them everywhere with their numerous fleets. We can enter into no connection with other nations without being injured by them in our interests and commerce. They must give place to us; the future of Carthage is at stake. Noble men! valiant warriors! let Etruria be the theatre of your future exploits!’

“The little Tyrian trader arose in his turn, and mounting his seat, his eyes flashing with anger, he cried, gesticulating wildly:—

“‘I am but a trader, but willingly would I take arms if I were but certain that my hand would strike

down the last Oscan! Gauls! destruction to the son of the Pelasgi! Destruction to the Etruscan!

"Half drunk, we re-echoed their cry, 'Death to the Etruscans!' as if their warriors already stood before us.

"The bacchanalian clamors were hushed by the sound of the brazen trumpets which announced the commencement of the civil and religious ceremonies. There was only time for us to seize our arms, and, each one taking command of his clan, to reach the place of *rendezvous*.

"On the top of a hill, around a stone altar, were ranged the Virgins of the Mistletoe, clad in snowy tunics fastened with copper girdles. They had left their mysterious retreats in the depths of the forests, to preside over this annual assembly.

"The Druids, in white robes, their heads bound with oak-leaves, the ovates, bards, and vergobreiths (judges and notables), clad in white, each holding a branch of oak, surrounded the Druidesses. A third circle, with music and banner, was formed on the plain, of the men, women, and children of the different tribes. The chieftains and the Knights of the Golden Collar, the former naked to the waist and tattooed with war-paint, the latter dressed in brilliant cloth, wearing casques of calf-snouts or wolf-heads, of which the muzzle formed the visor, mounted on horse-back and armed as if for battle, and followed by their squires and grooms, held the foremost rank.

"In the midst of a long silence, the bards, accompanied by cymbals and harps, chant a hymn in praise of the god Belenos, the golden-haired warrior, the sun-king, who triumphs over winter, makes the wheat and vine to grow, and fills the warrior with strength.

"The Arch-Druid eulogizes Stor-Can (white vulture), yesterday *brenn* of the Bituriges. His murderer, Bolg-Righ, comes forward and demands death. 'I swore to him whom I have slain through my unskilfulness, never in life or in death to be separated from him. I shall be perjured if I forget my oath. I must rejoin my brother in arms under the green dome of the great forest which surrounds the sun-palace of Belenos.'

"The Druidesses release him from his oath, but he persists. Her friends and dependents bid him adieu. Some charge him with commissions for the other life; others wish to share his fate, and die with him, but the Arch-Druid forbids the sacrifice by menacing them with the anger of Hesus. He also shows Bolg-Righ that he might be of greater use to his countrymen by remaining among them, and replacing the chieftain whom he has killed. Bolg-Righ answers by advancing hastily to throw himself upon the sacrificial stone, while singing his death-chant, and smilingly receives in his heart the sword-stroke of the Orates.

"'Weep his death during a day,' said the Druids to his friends; 'it is yielded to your weakness, and is enough for humanity.'

"The men of his clan then came to remove the corpse for interment. It was buried, by his desire, beside Stor-Can's.

"The Druids bade the vergobreiths advance—members of the permanent council chosen from among the notables and wisest of the clans—in order to proceed to the election of a new *brenn*. A warrior with hair dyed red and combed in a tuft on the top of his head, his body tattooed in blue, his chest, arms, and wrists decorated with golden necklaces and brace-

lets, and lance in hand, advances towards the Druids and the judges; it is Dhu-Lug (the black crow).

"My friends, Kad-Aneith, Dun-Glan, Wir-Dhu-Mar (the great black man), Or-Mael (the soldier of the valley), Luern (the *fôx*), ride rapidly towards me.

"You, Markek, offer yourself—forward!"

"Urged by my friends, I gallop towards the council. My comrades follow; those of Dhu-Lug advance also.

"Two candidates present themselves,' cries the herald, 'Dhu-Lug, chieftain of the clans of the lowlands, and Markek, chieftain of the forest clans; both are youthful, both are valiant—choose! choose!"

"Dhu-Lug, eyeing me from head to foot with disdain, said to the Druids and men of renown:—

"His mother's ancestors came upon our hunting-ground with Hu-Gadarn (Hugh the Powerful), and the Bituriges of the plains will never take for leader a Celt who has blood of the Kimri in his veins."

"I had spurred my horse towards my rival, and my boar-spear was ready to avenge me for his vainglorious words, when a youthful Druidess checked me, and made me a sign to listen.

"Markek!" she said, "do not anger Dhu-Lug; you are not here to answer him, but to obey the decision of the Druids and judges. Since your mother's father and his tribe crossed the cold waters of the Ravageuse (the Loire), with our consent to occupy the forest of the Coupures (Indre), we know that the men of your clan have more than once aided those of Dhu-Lug's, who, to-day, reproaches you with being a stranger. If the very obseiths will listen to me, they will give you the preference, and name you *brenn*."

"Holy Virgin! your decision is my law; but I

only ask the command of the warriors who are willing to cross with me the snow-capped mountains.'

"The warriors are moved, they clash their arms; their ranks open, and twenty chieftains of clans are arranged under my banners, proclaiming me *Wald-Righ* (head chieftain). The clans hostile to my election range themselves round Dhu-Lug, and prepare for combat. The bards throw themselves between the hostile lines, and by their sweet music awaken gentler feelings.

"Order is re-established; the fair-haired virgin, beautiful as day, who has already soothed my anger, and who is called Margareth, insists that Dhu-Lug and I should pledge ourselves to peace.

"'It is God's wish,' she says; 'to disobey, will be to anger him. Markek, you will lead the warriors to victory, but you must return. You, Dhu-Lug, will command those who wish to remain; you will protect the women, children, and the effects of the absent—God wills it!'

"On receiving from Margareth's hand the branch of consecrated mistletoe, to protect our arms, with respect and gratitude I kissed the hem of her linen garment.

"'Die, or return conqueror,' she said.

"Then she returned to her companions.

"Huge bonfires were lighted in the evening on the hill-tops, and the night was passed in feasting and dances, and projects of glory and combat.

"Our departure from the Biturigian land, and our march through the southern Celtic tribes and those of Issombrie, present nothing striking to my memory, except that our adventurous bands were augmented from day to day. After a march of two months, I

found myself crossing the snow-clad Apennines at the head of forty thousand warriors; Senoni, Bou, and Buturiges. Smiling fields spread themselves before us; sinuous rivers flowed through fertile pasturages, and past superb palaces gilded by a summer's sun. Farms, villas, villages, built on the gently sloping hills, were surrounded by green vineyards and olive woods; amid this rich verdure, the road could be traced, by its whiteness, and by the clouds of dust enveloping the moving chariots; groups of laborers were hastening to the fields—a sound of life, a breath of civilization, ascended even to us.

“‘Markek Wald-Righ,’ shouted my warriors, ‘forward! This is Etruria!’

“From the mountain-tops, a living avalanche, we precipitated ourselves upon these fertile valleys watered by the Arno and the Clanis (Chiana). We attacked the great city of Arretium (Arezzo). Its solid walls formed a long square—it was one of the twelve cities of the Etruscan confederation. The harvests were trampled under the feet of our horses, villas sacked, trees uprooted, and the country-people were put to constructing our tents and digging ditches around our camp, pitched at the confluence of the Arno and Arurha (the valiant umbro). In remembrance of our country, the camp was called *Biturigia*, now (*Borgo de San Sipolero*). A few days afterwards, our pickets posted in the woods hastened to me with the information that a long train of chariots and knights were advancing from the city towards our camp. Our trumpets called to arms; the war dogs were led forth; my warriors, impatient to measure their strength with the enemy, who heretofore had seemed determined to hide behind their walls, followed me from the camp;

but the advancing throngs had not a warlike appearance. An old man on horseback rode at the head of a body of white-robed maidens crownéd with flowers, their loosened locks floating over their shoulders. Next come the flute and harp players, in red tunics with brazen girdles, and a chorus of young people burning perfumes, and singing a long, plaintive chant. Behind them, in a chariot sparkling with gold and silver, and drawn by eight white horses with golden hoofs, is seated a young girl more beautiful than any others; she seemed a divinity. A long, black, transparent veil enveloped her; necklaces and bracelets covered her breast and arms. Her snowy robe, adorned with violet embroidery, is fastened at the throat by a large purple bow, the long ends flowing to her feet. Her hair, in waving masses, is powdered with gold-dust, and confined by strings of pearl.

"A young slave, dark-skinned and curly-headed, dressed in white, is seated behind her, holding a red parasol to shield the beautiful Etruscan from the burning sun, whose rays reflected through the shade bathe her face in rosy hues. A hundred slaves of different nations, Pelasgi, Libians, and Celts, follow the car, bearing precious vases, rich cloths, heavy carpets, or leading richly caparisoned horses, or oxen with silvered horns.

"The *cortège* stops, and the old man, bearing in his hand an olive-branch, emblem of peace, dismounts from his horse, and advanced towards us.

"I am Kilnias, the last scion of one of the most ancient families of Arretium. In me behold the father of this young Callirhoé. I come, obedient to the will of the gods, to place her in your hands. The inhabitants of Arretium have heard resounding in a cloud-

less sky a trumpet-sound so sharp and ominous that it made them tremble with fear. Other terrifying omens impelled the Arretines to consult the oracles and soothsayers. These have predicted the destruction of Etruscan civilization, and the occupation of the land of the Pelasgi by eight successive races. They have seen in your arrival before their city a manifestation of the wrath of Mamers, god of life and death. Our priests, desirous of diverting his anger, vowed to him a tithe of all born during the year; and, as a greater sacrifice, one of the virgins to whose care is confided the preservation of the sacred fire. The gods manifested that a daughter of my house was to be the one sacrificed, by causing a jet of blood to issue from beneath a festive table spread for my friends. My daughter, to save my country and my house, has been devoted to the gods Cabires. The Arretines, in sending me to place in your hands all that is most precious to me, hope that you will accept, besides, these rich gifts and these slaves, and that you will depart without ravaging the country. Now, youthful Celt, hear a father's prayer! Callirhoé, flower of the maidens of Arretium, is condemned to die. I know it. Slay without dishonoring her; kill her on the spot, and Axiokersos, great and powerful god, will protect your victorious arms.'

"Callirhoé had descended from her chariot. Her father, taking her hand, made her kneel before me, and then silently buried his head in his mantle.

"The maiden, throwing aside the veil covering her neck and shoulders, and exposing her bosom, said: 'Strike! your slave is prepared to die.'

"Her superb black eyes, her velvet skin, her coral lips, her perfect arms, and her proud, noble air made

her the most seductively beautiful woman my eyes had ever rested upon. Her heaving breast, her moist eyes, pleading like those of a hunted doe, stirred me to the depth of my soul. Raising her, I said:—

“‘I shall be proud to be the master of such a slave. I thank the gods, but I will not have you die! You are free; return to your people with your father. Of all the wealth which you offer me, I wish to retain only the hope of seeing you again.’

“‘Such is not the will of Mamers; you must kill me; if not to-day, to-morrow. I am yours, as is everything here; I shall stay.’

“An old slave, a Celt who had served as interpreter between Kilnias, his daughter, and me, now spoke:—

“‘I am called Karnach (of the land of ‘stones’); and by the laws of war I have been Kilnias’s slave for forty years. I swear by Belenos to have translated faithfully my master’s words and yours. Listen to my experience, and then act as you will. Beware of the Arretines. They are crafty and perfidious. The eyes of the beautiful Etruscan are snares for a youthful chieftain. She may wish, during your sleep, to rid her country of you. Send her hence, but keep the slaves and presents for your warriors.’

“Karnach might have been right, but I was too loyal myself to believe in the perfidy of others. ‘Your daughter,’ I said to Kilnias, ‘is free to return with you; but if she prefers to stay here, I swear to you by my immortal soul, that while I live she shall be respected. As to the slaves, horses, and beasts of burden sent by your countrymen, I accept them for my warriors, in token of alliance.’

“Kilnias pressed his lips to my hand to thank me,

and tried but vainly to persuade Callirhoé to return with him. He bids her farewell, saying:—

“‘Do not forget that the young chieftain is your master, and, above all, do not forget—’

“He speaks so low that she alone hears his parting words. Then, escorted by the band of maidens and musicians, he leaves us. I divide the presents among my warriors, and restore old Karnach and our other enslaved countrymen to liberty. Callirhoé only retains her negress, who does not wish to leave her.

“There is a great difference between the sumptuous palace Callirhoé has left and my hut, formed of mud and interlaced branches, with its simple furniture—a table, stool, and skins of wild beasts. When alone with this young girl, I found conversation very difficult, and I was very much troubled. I seat her at the table, and place a huge pôt of ~~wine~~ and piece of cold venison in a wooden dish before her. I invited her to take nourishment; and, to give an example, I ate heartily of the bread and drank copiously of the wine. My eating with so good an appetite amuses her, and she laughingly takes some food, and then throws herself down upon a bear-skin, signing to me that my stool is uncomfortable. She looks divinely beautiful in her flowing white robes, leaning carelessly upon her elbow, and nibbling like a rabbit at the hard, black bread. She is sad at leaving her father, her family, and her friends; and big tears tremble on her long lashes. I am pained, and try to console her by repeating the few words of her language that I remember. But I pronounce them with so strange an accent that she ends by laughing. This delights and emboldens me to cause her to name all the objects I can

to rec: touch with my hand. Thus I take my first lesson in
Oscan.

in is re: "My hut was divided into two parts. I placed
is part: Callirhoé and her black slave in the inner division,
dens u: arranging it as best I could, and, when night came, I
s am: lay down, armed, across her door. I do not suspect
ur oth: her of a wish to kill me, as Karnach has hinted; I
only s: had perceived all the frankness of her soul in her
ber. beautiful eyes, but I was already in love and jealous.

ptree: "The next morning a deputation of the inhabitants
of mu: of Arretium came in procession to the gates of my
ure-: camp. Thirty musicians, and twelve priests dressed
sion: in blue and crowned with sheaves of wheat, led four
diff: heifers without spot or blemish, and decorated with
it the: firs. Fifty maidens, with flowing robes, chanting
the: hymns, preceded them. Two painted wooden statues,
at: representing gods, are carried by two priests in white
in: mitres. One walks leaning on two youths, and seems
at: invested with supreme power. The chief magistrate
and dignitaries, and a large number of citizens and
women, follow the *cortège*; two files of soldiers flank
it. They are dressed in cuirasses of scale armor, re-
sembling leathern tunics, and thigh-pieces of bronze.
They wear golden casques with movable visors, deco-
rated with red aigrets, and carry short lances, swords,
and round convex shields. Citizens and countrymen
close the procession. It stopped before the high
earthworks of Camp Biturigia. The young girls,
holding each other by the hand, dance in a circle
around the two statues placed upon the ground. The
priests immolate the four heifers, eviscerate them, and
consult their entrails. Advancing alone to the foot
of the ramparts, the high-priest invites us to join

them; but Karnach, fearing a stratagem, warns us against accepting.

"Callirhoé, witness with us of this ceremony, observing her father in the crowd, takes my hand and beckons me to follow her. The empire she had acquired over me is already so great that I should have followed her to death. Kad-Aneith and Dun-Glan, my friends, unwilling to leave me, also cross the fosse, and we three are at the mercy of our enemies.

"I could not understand Callirhoé's address to her countrymen. Her companions bow before her, embracing her knees, and looking at me with astonishment. The high-priest advanced, and plants a lance between us.

"'May Mamers, of whom this lance is emblematic, be a witness of what I say to you. Valiant warrior! in your generosity toward a consecrated virgin we see the clemency and pardon of the gods. With power to slay her, you forbore; with power to dishonor, you respected her. To-day we offer you peace and friendship. Come with your warriors amongst us; the gates of the city are open to you.'

"I wished to consult my companions in arms, but Callirhoé did not give me the time.

"'Accept,' she whispered, pushing me toward the old man.

"He kissed me, which was not agreeable, and seated me between the two images. The chorus of young girls intoned a hymn in my praise, rained flowers upon me, and burned perfumes about me as if I had been a god.

"My soldiers had come forth under arms to support us in case of treachery; but seeing only a handful of men, they patiently waited the termination of the

ceremonies. Twelve black sheep were immolated, and their flesh roasted, that all those present might partake of it. When, upon the invitation of the high-priest, the Gauls had partaken of the flesh of the victims, cries of joy and joyful songs were uttered by the Etruscans. Kilnias again embraces me; then, drawing from his belt a small wooden tablet, he broke it in two and gave me half, saying: 'Be my guest, generous Celt! Come to my house, and regard as yours everything it contains.'

"I accept, and I feel Callirhoé press my hand in token of gladness. We are invited to enter the city and participate in the Etruscan feasts, called Sectisternian. For eight days the city-gates are open, and all strangers are admitted; law cases are stopped, quarrels made up, and prisoners liberated. In the temples, open to the people, tables covered with first-things are spread before the images of the gods, who, reclining upon sumptuous beds, receive the offerings and libations of the people of the country, and of the town. The houses are open to all comers, and there is a rivalry as to who shall entertain the Celts.

"The streets of the city are wide, crossing each other at right angles. Public squares, ornamented with marble fountains or bronze columns, magnificent temples, their fronts painted in dazzling colors, endless colonnades, porticos, palaces with gilded roofs, flowing waters, statues, awnings spread above the streets, to shade the traders who expose their goods on the stone or mosaic sidewalks, this beautiful city seemed to us like a dream. The fair-skinned Bituriges with flowing hair, mingle with the dark-skinned Arretines crowned with flowers. Here, some of our warriors try to move in measure to the sound of

double flutes, with maidens habited in diaphanous robes; there, Arretines attempt our national dances, stamping with their feet to the rhythm of huge brass horns. Etruscan and Gallic soldiers arm in arm, their heads dizzy with wine, traverse the city, each singing his own separate song.

"At the head of a brilliant *cortège*, the principal magistrate of Arretium, the lucumon—a crown of golden leaves on his head, a tunic embroidered in spangle with stars and silver palms partially concealing his mantle of purple and white—advances in his chariot, drawn by eight white horses with crimson leather trappings. We simultaneously spring to the ground. He salutes me by bending his body to one side, and placing his hand upon his heart, he wishes to conduct me to his palace; but I have promised Kilnias to be his guest during the feast. I thank the lucumon as politely as a barbarian can, but nevertheless I cannot avoid accompanying him, and as there was to be a representation at the theatre, thither I followed him.

"An immense crowd press against us and climb the arches as if for an assault; a tumult, a deafening clamor is around us. A large blue awning, spangled with golden stars, roofs in the inclosure, to keep the sun from the hall; it does not, however, prevent the heat from being overpowering. Many of the audience have thrown off their sandals and upper garments. Men and women, seated indiscriminately next each other, fan themselves and drink the iced wines of Greece, which the vendors of little cakes cry at the top of their head-splitting voices. There is silence at sight of a herald who appears to announce the title of the piece to be played, and the name of the author.

Twenty-four old men enter from the theatre, singing, and burning perfumes upon an altar built in the midst of an unoccupied space below the seats.

“This ceremony completed, a black-bearded actor, dressed in a tunic made of many colored pieces, appears on the front of the stage. He is welcomed by cries and loud applause, which prevent him from beginning. At length silence is restored, and the man in parti-colored dress relates, with comic actions, a long history which I do not understand, but which carries away the Arretines, for they all hold their sides with laughter. The Gauls love to laugh; and I should have liked to understand what was passing, but fear to seem indiscreet if I ask my neighbors for information. I think all is over, and prepare to leave, when a curtain placed before me disappears through the planks, to the sound of invisible music. I then see the peristyle of a thousand-columned palace enriched with gold and paintings. The back opens upon the country, and many persons, variously habited, having masks upon their faces, and sandals of inordinate size upon their feet, enter, accompanied by female flute-players. They say and do things openly of which, even when alone, I would not dare to think, but which divert the men greatly and make the women blush. Dun-Glan fell asleep in the middle of the play, and Kad-Aneith, who yawned enough to dislocate his jaws, rose and went to take a walk through the city. I, to whom everything was new, stared with all my eyes, unable to say if it were fiction or reality.

“The representation over, I went to dine with a large party at the lucumon’s. I saw nothing but soft flower-strewn beds, in place of chairs, around the table. I was obliged to lie down like the rest, a posi-

tion inconvenient for eating, and the more indecent, as I, like the other guests, have a young slave seated at my feet, so lightly clad that she might as well be naked. She was placed there to help to wine, brush off the flies, or satisfy any fancy; but the long fan of peacocks' plumes which she waved over my face, and the kisses she wished to inflict upon me, kept me from eating at my ease. Dun-Glan, when his slave approached his mouth with her dark face, drove her away with a kick. I dismissed mine less roughly, and seated myself without ceremony on the edge of the bed. The repast was splendid. The slaves constantly exchange the goblets for more costly ones, filled with the most renowned wines of Etruria and Greece. Between each course, troops of musicians and dancers enter to amuse us by their lascivious songs and dances. When any one distinguished herself by grace or genius, the *lucumon* presented her with a gold cup, a silver dish, or addressed to her some flattering compliment. There was even a boy who danced so well that the *lucumon* made him sit near him, and placed a crown of flowers upon his head, saying:—

“‘I make you free.’

“Towards the end of the repast, the wines and perfumes had so muddled the brains of the *convives*, all more or less men of note in the city, that they had to be taken home by their clients, slaves, or lictors. Thus the drunkenness of Kad-Aneith, who had partaken of everything, passed unnoticed. Dun-Glan returned to the camp, and I, preceded by slaves bearing torches, and accompanied by some warriors of my clan, returned to Kilnias's house. On reaching there, I find my squire Kad-Wir dead-drunk, lying across the entrance. He had passed the day in drinking in a

tavern with some friends, in the company of rope-dancers and jugglers, who had robbed him of his purse and weapons. Callirhoé, despite the lateness of the hour, like a faithful slave, awaited me. Taking from the hands of the negress a lamp of perfumed oil, which in burning fills the air with an odor of myrrh, she beckons me to follow her to the apartment which she has prepared for me. As we enter the chamber a current of air extinguishes the light, and there she was, half laughing, half frightened, trying to find her way in the dark. Guided by the rustling of her robes, I approached her. My hands meet hers, and, rendered bold by the darkness, I clasp her slender form in my arms; she utters a cry of surprise, but without attempting to defend herself from my embrace. I feel her heart beating against mine, and her perfect lips yield me a kiss. 'Let me go, let me go!' she cries, hearing the approach of the negress with a light.

"And she flies.

"Alone with my own thoughts, I repent of the kiss which I had ravished from Callirhoé. I had offended her, since I had made her flee, and, furious against myself, I toss restlessly on my perfumed bed, unable to sleep. I resolved to leave the luxurious couch, and to go and lie upon the mosaic pavement, where, at length, I slept.

"During the eight days which these feasts lasted, the Arretines treated us generously, and as friends. We had already been able to show them our gratitude, by the destruction of a band of Siculan thieves and Pelasgian slaves, who had organized in the mountains, and travelled through the country, despoiling travellers.

"The larger number of my Gauls had returned to

their camp, which had become a real colony. The Arretines had conceded certain lands to us, and more than one youthful Etruscan had voluntarily chosen a husband amongst us. I commenced to speak the language of my beloved, and, somewhat habituated to this new existence, I already understood the benefits and charms of civilization.

"Many a time I offered Callirhoé her liberty; but she always refused it.

"'I do not wish to be free, for my slavery is my security,' she said. 'Our cruel and superstitious priests have vowed me to the god Mamers and to you, who ought to have slain me. As long as I belong to you, according to their own decision, they dare not touch me; but the day that I become free, I fall into their power, and then woe to me, Markek!'

"My love for her was a violent passion, and one day, when I was earnestly entreating her to be my wife, she said:—

"'Listen, and when you have heard me, be yourself my judge. I was scarcely twelve, when the high-priest, touching me with his wand, designated me to guard the vestal fires. I was initiated into the mysteries. I took vows of chastity at an age when I never dreamed that love could interfere with my duties, or overcome my will. To-day, this god, at once gentle and cruel, masters my heart. If you make me culpable and perjured, and our priests discover it, I shall be burned alive. Believe me, Markek, I burn with the same fire that consumes you, but there is no human power that can release me from my vows. There is but one way for us to love; it is together to vow ourselves to the gods Cabires, stronger, more powerful than Vesta and Mamers. But you?

Will you give up for me, a stranger, your terrible God?"

"My God releases you from the words which you have spoken without understanding them. To possess you, I will vow myself, if you require it, to your gods Cabires; but you shall, on your side, swear by your immortal soul to love me ever."

"I will swear it this night. At the fifth hour, come to the foliage bower in my father's garden; I will be there."

"How long the fifth hour of the night seemed in coming! I was at the appointed place long before Callirhoé. The moon was reflected on a sheet of water in shimmering bands. Gusts of wind brought to my ear the mysterious sounds of night. I could distinguish the distant baying of our war-dogs. Each moment fancy cheated me into the belief that I heard the steps of my beloved; but it was only the rustling of the leaves.

"At length the young vestal came.

"Come," she whispers; "make no sound; all sleep."

"I followed her, cautiously, into a small oratory, illumined by a lamp, casting a bluish light upon seven images of bronze, of which four had the heads of animals. Callirhoé, clad in long black garments, removed her slippers, loosened her purple girdle, unfastened her heavy brown hair, which fell in masses to her feet, and threw her arms around my neck.

"If you would preserve her that you love," she whispered, "guard the secret of that which you will see here, guard it even beyond the tomb."

"I promised. Then making me lay aside my arms, she orders me to lie at the foot of the altar. Incense is burning there of so acrid an odor that it affects my

head. Taking a new-born black lamb, she strangles it above the flame. While the flesh of the little animal is burning, Callirhoé, with wildly staring eyes, her hands dyed in blood, and her arms raised towards the brazen gods, stamps while pronouncing words which I can never repeat, and with the blood of her victim traces cabalistic lines on my forehead and breast.

"She takes off the large bracelet worn from choice as a badge of her slavery, and traces devices on the metal with a pointed *stylus* dipped in the lamb's blood. She pours a liquid, pure and clear as water, into an earthen vase placed upon the altar, steeps her bracelet in it, and holding my hand, her right arm extended towards the bronze images, she orders me to repeat this formula after her :—

' Before the gods Cabires,
Markek and Callirhoé,
Living or dead,
Swear themselves to
An eternal love.'

"This oath pronounced, my beautiful slave cuts a lock of hair from her head, and another from mine, mingles them together and throws them upon the heated charcoal. She then withdraws her bracelet, and displays to me, deeply graven in the metal, the oath which she has pronounced.

"'The gods are propitious to us,' she exclaims, commencing to dance and sing as she strikes violently upon her tambourine.

"This dance soon becomes frenzied ; her songs are but wild cries ; a real transport seizes her.

"'They come, they are numberless !' she cries. 'A great army winds across our fields, an army ready to destroy all. Flames and blood are everywhere. Now

here, now there! Vengeance is kindled! A valiant chieftain is at the head of this warlike band. Go, Markek, blood is everywhere. If he does not return soon to aid me, Markek will find the house of Kilnias deserted; but no, no! he returns! Nothing now can separate us in life or in death!

"Two days afterwards, Kad-Aneith, Dun-Glan, Kadmar, and some other chieftains were at my tent partaking of a repast, when a great disturbance was heard in the camp. Hastening to the spot, we find that the noise is occasioned by a band of Gallic colonists who have sought us with torn and bloody clothes, and followed by their wives and children. One of the women, a tall brunette, her hair disordered, her face and shoulders streaked with blood, exhibits to the soldiers the body of a child.

"'Look,' she cried, 'how the friends of your friends have received us! Vengeance!'

"This is what had happened.

"A number of Gallic colonists desirous of lands had continually sought them at the hands of the Arretines.

"The lucumon having assembled their principal men, addressed them thus:—

"'I have taken under consideration the demands of my friends the Gauls. It does not rest with me to cede to them the country around Arretine; it does not belong to me; but, some leagues hence, the people of Camars (Clusium) have more ground than they can cultivate; they will be glad to cede a portion of it to you. Go! and may the gods prove favorable to you.'

"The colonists, trusting in his words, started with their families and their cattle for Camars, whence they had been rudely repulsed, and they were thus

compelled to believe that the lucumon had trifled with them. In fact, the people of the Camars were rivals of the Arretines, though belonging to the same confederation, and the lucumon had turned aside the Gallic torrent from his own city, by directing it against his enemies.

"At the sight of our countrymen thus maltreated, anger possessed us. We rushed to arms.

"'Death to the Etruscans!' cried Luern.

"'I have drank so much of their wine,' exclaimed Kad-Aneith, 'that I have no thirst left but for their blood!'

"I sought the lucumon. He had departed for his villa in the Apennines. I deferred until his return my intended explanation with him, and gave the signal for departure on the morrow. I desired, before commencing this expedition, to say farewell to Callirhoé, perhaps forever! I left the camp at night, and as the city gates closed early, I sought her by stealth. A small stream flowed under the fortified walls; the bed was dry, and through it I gained admission to the city, and soon reached Kilnias' house. Nala, the black slave, conducted me to the presence of her mistress. Callirhoé, clad in a robe of white linen, fastened at the throat by a golden band, her hair raised in puffs upon her forehead, and confined behind in a net, powdered with gold-dust, and her neck, ears, and arms glittering with jewels, was half reclining upon a couch of lemon-wood, inlaid with ivory, and covered with purple and gold brocade. She was expecting me to supper. As soon as she sees me, she comes to me, relieves me of my weapons, places me in her own seat, and throws herself at my feet. The negress leaves us, after placing on the blue table-cloth shell-fish, cold

game, fish, and fruit in silver dishes. The white wine sparkles in amphoræ of Phœnician glass. The crystal goblets, cut in facets, sparkle like stars in the light of the perfumed candelabras. The floor, table, and even the couch are strewn with rose and orange leaves. Callirhoé is sad; she wishes to follow me. She weeps, and to give voice to her grief, she takes her lute and sings.

“ ‘Markek is my husband; the gods have registered our vows. His eyes are soft and blue, his lips like coral. His hair has borrowed the gloss of the raven’s wing, his eyebrows are arches. Markek is a warrior filled with glory and with strength. In combat he has no rival. The air groans beneath his sword. The eagle dares not soar above his head. When his steed is wet with combat, the hearts of his enemies are withered.’

“ After a slight pause, she continues:—

“ ‘Like the sharp-scythed reaper, who, careless of complaint, levels at once the tender herb and the ripe blades, death makes no difference between the husband and the wife, between the old man and the grandchild; he regards neither age nor happiness; he cuts us down like the plants of the field. Such is the law of the universe; nothing is born but to die, for fate numbers every breath of man.’

“ The sad and poetic words of Callirhoé effected in me a sort of transformation, which I felt without understanding. Until then a child of nature, I had loved her with my mind, perhaps more passionately as I had for a long time desired to possess, yet respected her. Little by little this love, which partook of a strong feeling of friendship, such as is experienced for a brother in arms, had become modified, and it seemed to

me that I loved this gentle, graceful being as a father loves a child. In her sadness, Callirhoé awakened other and new feelings. She plunged me into reveries at once sad and smiling. Her own nature was a mingling of light and shade. I had never studied the Druidical religion, and now I reproached myself for the neglect, as I might have taught Callirhoé, and made her look with confidence upon the future. It seemed to me that had I received instruction from the pure and smiling Margareth, I could have taught wisdom to my beautiful Etruscan, in return for the voluptuous mysteries which she revealed to me. Unhappily, at that epoch I did not pursue a life of study and reflection. Destiny had marked out my path; curiosity and love of conquest led me forward to accomplish my task; I was a blind agent of civilizing progress.

"I listened to Callirhoé with a smile of resignation, content to accept what destiny offered.

"'I have a presentiment that we shall never meet again,' she whispered, tearfully. 'Oh, my beloved, take this necklace of wolf's teeth; wear it always, it is a charm against death.'

"Every gift of Callirhoé's being dear, without believing in its talismanic influence, I placed it around my neck.

"By what occult science, by what subtile philters, have you gained such entire possession of me? for I am madly in love with you!

"'It is a charm without poison or magic, Markek, and yet infallible; it is to love in order to be loved.'

"Day commenced to break. It became necessary to tear myself from the sweet caresses of my companion."

* * * * *

Here I was compelled to suspend my recital for a

moment. My remembrance of facts was becoming confused.

"How!" said Fanny, "is that all? Did you not again see Callirhoé?"

"I remember perfectly all that relates to her," I answered; "but the campaign which separated me from her presents itself less clearly to my mind; it is because its history has been written in various ways, and I am compelled to seek the reality in my memory.

"Stop, I have it.

"We assaulted the Etruscans of Camars; were repulsed, and invested the town. Three youths present themselves at our advanced posts. They call themselves Fabii, and declare that they are sent from Rome to conciliate us. Unsuspicious, I allow them to enter Camars; they join the enemy in a *sortie* against us. Dun-Glan, indignant, advances towards one of the three with upraised battle-axe. A javelin launched by the Roman transfixes his heart. Honor and renown to the brave Dun-Glan, fallen in combat! Shame and woe to traitors! I caused the retreat to be sounded, and all swear with me that Dun-Glan's death should be avenged or Rome destroyed. But you know what answer the Romans gave to my envoy when he demanded for me that the Fabii should be delivered up to us."

"Ah! then," said my uncle, laughingly, "you were called Brennus in those days."

"The Romans turned the title of *brenn* (chief) into a proper name.

"Yes, you are right; I remember having read so, when a child, in my history. The Romans dismissed your envoys, and rewarded the Fabii, in place of pun-

ishing them. What would you? it was then as now, every man for himself."

"Yes," I replied, "in those days, especially, their principle was that the argument of the strongest was always the best, and they knew very little of the law of nations; but the simple Gauls held their words sacred, and in this, which was I confess a mere plundering raid, we bore with us our chivalric feelings and ideas of courage.

"Our overwhelming cavalry, marching in three ranks, met the Roman army at the confluence of the Allia and Albula, and swept them off as reapers sweep the harvest. At dawn of the third day afterwards, we arrived before the gates of Rome. You know what took place then."

"Yes," cried Fanny, "the whole terrified population had fled for refuge to the citadel, and the Gauls found the gates open, and the city abandoned."

"It was," I continued, "a solemn and terrible sight, this great and wealthy city sad and silent. We entered tremblingly, we dared touch nothing. It seemed as if we were moving in a dream."

"Nevertheless," remarked Marguerite, "one of you dared to pull the beard of a venerable senator, and I declare the fact has always scandalized me."

"Good heavens!" I replied, "before condemning, you ought to know how it happened. It was my squire, Kad-Wir."

"Kadour!" exclaimed Fanny, laughing.

"Kadour or Kad-Wir, as you please. After having traversed the whole city without meeting any one, we arrive at the public square, and at length, under the porticos of their palaces, found some old men dressed in purple and seated in ivory chairs. They

do not rise upon our approach. Leaning on their white staffs, they remain motionless as statues, seeking to awe us by their majestic looks; but the Gauls are not rarely duped by an affectation of a dignity which might impose upon weaker minds. They have always looked boldly in the face of persons and things. They found it laughable that an attempt should be made to frighten them. What is new is generally amusing. My squire Kad-Wir, approaching one of these impassible old men, after having examined him with naïve curiosity, asked for an explanation of this new way of fighting. The senator not deigning an answer, Kad-Wir—he told me so himself afterwards—doubted if he were alive. To assure himself, he softly touched the old man's beard, when the Roman struck him over the head with his staff. Kad-Wir was angered, and before I had time to interfere had plunged his knife into the old Roman's heart. This was the signal for carnage. The greater part of the citizens had fled at our approach. Some of the senators and chief citizens, who, in order to avert the anger of the gods, had devoted themselves to the danger by remaining, were put to the sword. The city is pillaged and burned; we camp upon its smoking ruins. Our promise was kept to the soul of Dun-Glan—Rome was no more. You know the history of the capitol, I will not relate that to you."

"Excuse me," remarked my uncle, "I would like to know if the story of the geese is true."

"It is too natural not to be true, and that accursed incident had nearly cost me my life."

"Your life?"

"Yes. Failing in our first assaults, we were burning with anger and impatience at the base of the rock.

We had ravaged the country and supplies began to fail us. Our war-dogs were already famished. I propose as a last effort to attempt a nocturnal surprise. All wish to follow me. I draw thirty warriors by lot, leaving the rest to rush into the citadel when we open the gates. During the day I reconnoitred the road I intended taking. It was the most dangerous, but likewise the most carelessly guarded. Noiselessly we set out. The night is dark, and the silence so profound that I can hear the labored breathing of the warriors climbing behind me. One slips and rolls down the rocks; he utters no cry, speaks no word. The noise of his falling body has not disturbed the garrison. I continue climbing by seizing upon the least projections of the rock; I place my hand upon an animal, and was about to launch him into eternity when I recognize my dog Dhu, who had followed me in spite of myself. At last the top of the hill is gained. I touch the rampart. It is so low at this point that my dog clears it at a bound. I spring over, followed by my comrades. A sleeping sentinel is killed before he has time to arouse himself. Already the ropeladders are thrown to the warriors below, who noiselessly commence the ascent. I advance, following my dog, trained to track the enemy. Suddenly he pauses and springs into a flock of geese. He strangles one, and makes but a mouthful of it. Poor Dhu was starving, and I pardon this fault; but the other fowls are frightened, and utter loud and piercing cries. The besieged rush out, torch in hand, throw themselves upon us, and repulse us with their huge bucklers. I strike at them—it is as useless as if I had attacked a wall. Pushed and dragged by my friends, I trip over the wall and roll down the precipice.

"On opening my eyes, I find the horizon streaked with light; day is dawning. I looked around me. I was suspended over an abyss, at the bottom of which were lying the corpses of my companions. Something jerked my garments, and shook me violently. The jerks drew me gradually back upon a ledge of rock. It was my dog Dhu, who had seized me in my fall. Still my position seemed desperate; but I did not stop to think of it. I invoked the help of Teutates and of the Cabires, Callirhoé's gods, and I used my feet and hands so well that I succeeded in saving myself from the precipice, but not from the view of the besieged, who could see me from the walls. As the day was brightening, I felt that no time was to be lost. Dhu guides me, and where a dog can creep a young agile Gaul can pass. Holding on to the brambles or irregularities of the rocks, slipping or rolling upon the mossy slopes, in the twinkle of an eye I am at the foot of the Capitoline. I find my comrades; but of the thirty who had attempted the assault with me, I was the only one left alive.

"I stop; the painful sight of my dead companions shocks me."

"Do you think," said Fanny, "that Noiraud, father Carnat's dog, is a descendant of your faithful black Dhu?"

"Why not," said Marguerite; "and perhaps Carnat himself may be the slave Karnach, returned to this world."

"That is nothing to me," said my uncle. "But the history of Camillus! Ah! you must lower your tone; you see I know that, too."

"No! Camillus was not there. He did not come. The Romans, who have written their own history,

have falsified ours somewhat. I recall the facts—I, the pretended Brennus! As you remember what you have read, dear uncle, you know that at length the Romans offered to make peace, and submitted to severe conditions. First, to pay two thousand pounds of gold; second, to furnish supplies and vehicles to transport our booty; third, to cede to the Senoni, our allies, a portion of their territory; fourth, always to leave open one gate of their city, if they should rebuild it, in order that we should not have the trouble of forcing it open to enter when it might please us to return. They needed many days to collect so much gold. The wealth of the temples, the silver of the state, and even the jewels of their women, scarce sufficed. Their senators and priests came in procession to pay us the tribute; but I soon saw that they were using false weights, and I complained of it. As they denied the fact, and I was determined not to be duped, I drew my sword, and, casting it into the balance, said to my warriors:—

“ ‘ Do as I do—oppose force to bad faith!’ ”

“ Then, addressing the Romans, I said:— ”

“ ‘ And you, ye vanquished! woe to you if you do not recognize the weight of Gallic swords!’ ”

“ The enemy yielded and paid. Seven months had elapsed since I had seen Callirhoé, and I longed to meet her. I gave the signal of departure. Loaded with booty and glorious spoils, we took up our line of march. Camillus, after the battle of the Allia, had retired to Veii, violated faith, and harassed our rear; but the body of the army, composed of Senoni and Boii, were not disturbed. Our auxiliaries returning homeward, left us at our camp of Biturigia, making us promise to visit them as we returned to Gaul, which

my comrades now desired to do. They wished to see once more the banks of the Andria (Indre), and to enjoy their wealth and relate their feats of arms. I had resolved to remain near Callirhoé.

“Passing rapidly over events with which you are familiar, I will enter upon my personal history, and I am obliged to entreat you not to interrupt me, for my brain is oppressed with a multitude of details that might escape me.

“Kilnias met me at the camp.

““Oh! you who respected my daughter, why have you so long delayed your return? Perhaps there is yet time to save her; she, with everything I possess, belongs to you. Your magnanimity towards her, my hospitality to you, the inscription upon the bracelet she wears constantly, have led to her being accused of having forgotten her vows of chastity. Her black slave, when put to the torture, has made a confession, taken as a proof of the culpability of my child. The lucumon, the judges, and the priests condemned her to be buried alive, and you to be beheaded and your body thrown to the dogs. The priests and vestals came in state to seize Callirhoé and conduct her to the temple. After removing her fillets and vestments the lictors struck her before my eyes with rods; but she uttered no complaints; her heart, filled with your image, did not shrink. Then the butchers inclosed her in a bier, the interior of which was lined with cushions, to stifle the cries of their victim; but Callirhoé made no sound. A crowd followed the sad and silent procession; the shops were closed; the public were in mourning; for my daughter was beloved and esteemed by all in Arretium. Within the city, at the foot of the walls, the solemn *cortège* stopped. The lictors opened

the bier, the high-priest took the vestal, who retained her firmness, and led her to the cave which she was never to leave. My beloved child, turning towards me, said:—

““Father, farewell!”

““Three times she cried, “Mark! Mark! Mark!” She entered calmly; her veil caught in the ladder, she coolly disengaged it. Scarcely had she reached the bottom of her tomb, when the executioner withdrew the ladder. The slaves covered the opening with a large stone, on which they piled the earth, to obliterate all trace of the presence of my daughter. I have sworn to save her, or to avenge her, even if I should become a traitor to my country! I have watched for you for three days. Now you cannot hope to enter the city, save by stratagem. The gates are solid and well guarded; the high walls are thick, and the inhabitants are anxious for a battle. The rich booty you bring tempts them. The Etruscans welcomed you during their feasts, because they needed your arms and your valor to oppose the daily incursions of the Romans; now, as there is nothing to fear from those you have conquered, they are anxious to drive you again across the Apennines. The lucumon has already driven from Arretium the Gauls who established themselves there. You have returned braver, but less numerous; you were wrong to allow the Senoni and Boii to leave you. With their help you might have assaulted the city, while with only your handful of men you dare not dream of it. What is to be done, O immortal gods! to save my daughter, who is dying, who is perhaps already dead?”

“The old man flung himself upon the ground, and, covering his face, gave vent to his anguish.

“‘ Rise, Kilnias, this night, living, or dead, I will have your daughter. Return to the city, go to the Lucumon, tell him I sent you, and that in one hour his gates must be opened, or I will punish him for the insults offered to my countrymen. If he consents, I re-enter with my warriors, and we will go to Callirhoé’s aid; should he refuse, alone and disguised I will enter by the bed of the torrent, where with two slaves you shall await me. To weep is unworthy a man; we must act. Go! and may the gods protect you!’

“Assembling my warriors, I confide to them my plan of attack. Five or six hundred men, under the command of Wir-Dhu-Mar, are to assault the walls, to draw the enemy’s attention to that point, while I with my squire would quietly enter the city, and open the gates to a reserve corps under the lead of Kad-Aneith, who is to take the besieged in the rear. Karnach insisted that our forces were too small to take Arretium.

“‘Wald-Righ’s real aim is to seek Callirhoé,’ said he. ‘He is under the charm of a witch. I warned him when the black-eyed woman first came.’ He would not listen to me. By her powerful philters she has destroyed his wisdom. To-day he does not fear to expose his life and the lives of his brave warriors to reclaim a slave, for the proud Etruscan belongs to him. If he wants a wife, let him choose a free woman of Gaul, and not a slave from the accursed and fated race of Cus.’

“‘Karnach,’ I replied, ‘you cannot forgive Kilnias and his daughter for having owned you. You are now free; and the past ought to be forgotten. It is disgraceful for a Gaul to insult a woman; and if you are a true man, you will make reparation. Learn that

my slave is dead, and if I attempt to assault Arretium, it is to punish the lucumon for having deceived us.'

"What matters," said Kad-Aneith, 'so that we fight! Let Karnach remonstrate and prophesy to the prudent husbandmen and timid slaves, only fit to cultivate the earth. We are warriors, and care for combat alone. Woe to the Arretines!'

"The other chiefs of the clan re-echoed Kad-Aneith's cry, and, scarce arrived from a long march, my brave soldiers are ready for battle. The hour given to the lucumon having expired, and the gates of the city being still closed, I gave orders for the assault, despite the darkness. The Arretines knowing that the Gauls are unaccustomed to *ruses* in war, and that they always attack an enemy *en masse*, and in front, hastened to the walls which Wir-Dhu-Mar and his forces were tumultuously attacking. With Kad-Wir I passed beneath the walls, and, thanks to our disguises and the obscurity, we traverse the city undiscovered. The inhabitants, disturbed and surprised at the sudden attack of their former allies, seized their arms, and rushed to the place of combat.

"I meet Kilnias, also disguised, and we hastened to the spot where Callirhoé is buried. This part of Arretium is deserted, but a gate near us is guarded by two soldiers. We are deliberating how to rid ourselves of them without noise, when my dogs, which have followed in spite of my wishes, slip by me. There was no time to lose; at a signal from me, Dhu springs upon one of the sentinels, and Kad-Wir cleaves the head of the other with a blow of his axe. Then, combining our efforts, we pull upon the drawbridge chains. Kad-Aneith, ready in ambuscade with three hundred warriors, enters the city. Kilnias calls his slaves,

hidden in a neighboring house, and orders them to throw aside the earth which covers his daughter's tomb. Superstitious fear seizes them; they refuse, and take to flight. I undertake the work. The stone is raised. I seize a rope and descend into the tomb. All is silent. We have come too late.

"By the dying flame of a lamp I see my beloved lying motionless upon the earth. She yet grasps an empty amphora, from which she has drained the last drop of water. Clasping her in my arms, I regain the open air.

"Kilnias, on seeing the dead body of his child, bursts into tears and maledictions; and I, overwhelmed by my grief, with dry and staring eye, look without believing that this stiff and frozen corpse that I hold, and whose hands my dog Dhu licks, can be Callirhoé. A noise of arms and horses, cries and vociferations, approaches us without arousing me from my stupor.

"'Let us go,' says Kad-Wir; 'our people flee!'

"Kad-Aneith, wounded in the face, and sobbing with rage, followed by his disorganized clan, rushes to me, exclaiming:—

"'What do you here, embracing this corpse?'

"'It is my murdered slave.'

"'Leave it and flee; the enemy is upon us; we are betrayed! Come, we will rally on the plain.'

"Taking up Callirhoé's body, I start to cross the moat, where a crowd of fugitives separate me from Kad-Aneith and Kilnias. An armed band of Etruscan cavalry force me to take refuge, with my precious burden, in a garden. Having a duty to perform, I flee like a coward. I wish to give my dead love a funeral worthy of her. Thanks to the obscurity of

the night, I escape the victors, whose cries of triumph I hear in the distance. I resume my painful march across the country. Suddenly two men issue from a neighboring field. I set my dogs upon them; but Than and Dhu recognize Kad-Aneith and my squire.

"Where is Kilnias?" I asked.

"I saw him flee with our people," answered Kad-Aneith. "Shame and dishonor, to see Gauls flee thus!"

"In crossing the plain, my friend told me that the Arratines had been informed of our intended attack, and that a body of their troops had been posted in a ravine awaiting us. Wir-Dhu-Mar, taken in the rear, had been struck down in mounting to the assault. Kad-Aneith's soldiers, spread through the city, had been attacked separately by the inhabitants, and the cavalry of the lucumon made short work of those who resisted. Then the rout became general.

"But, silence!" he said, suddenly. "A troop of soldiers is coming behind us. If we remain here, we shall be seen and slain."

"A little to the left was a hay-stack. We gained its shelter, intending to wait till the enemy should pass; but three of the soldiers, bearing a torch, approached our place of concealment.

"Fire it," said one. "We shall see the better to unearth them."

"He had not finished his sentence when he fell dead. Kad-Aneith, finding that we were discovered, had struck him with a stone from his sling. The second picked up the torch, and, as he was about to throw it at the hay stack, Kad-Wir's axe, thrown with all his force, struck him on the head, and stretched

him on the grass. The third fled towards the main body, crying :—

“ ‘The Gauls, the Gauls!’

“By the light of this torch, which commenced to fire the grass, I saw some thirty archers, lightly armed.

“ ‘We must die here,’ I cried to my two companions, ‘if we do not kill all of them.’

“I gathered a few bundles of hay, and placed them at a little distance behind the stack. There I hid Callirhoé’s body. Kad-Aneith, with the agility of a cat, sprang out and seized the bows and arrows of the slain Etruscans. Kad-Wir, in an attempt to extinguish the torch, received an arrow in the shoulder, which disabled him from fighting.

“ ‘Stay by the corpse,’ I cried, ‘and see that we are not taken in the rear.’

“The torch burning on the ground was a fatal trap for the enemy. If any advanced to pick it up, he received an arrow from Kad-Aneith or from me. Hidden beneath the hay-stack, we had disabled or killed at least twelve of our enemies before making the *sortie* which we meditated. Our arrows exhausted, we had only our slings left. The Etruscans, not knowing with how many enemies they had to do, recoiled at first. Then they advanced *en masse*. Two more fell; but they had possessed themselves of the torch.

“ ‘They must see us now,’ I cry to Kad-Aneith.

“ ‘Let us show ourselves, then.’

“He, with his sword, and I, with my battle-axe, shouting as if followed by an army, urge on the dogs, who are biting furiously, and charge the enemy, striking around like smiths on an anvil. Not one blow

was lost; and if our blood flowed in streams, we did not feel it, as we chanted our war-songs. The Etruscans fighting fled, till by the light of the burning haystacks they see that they have but two enemies to deal with. They return to the charge. Happily there were but eight left, and but one of these on horseback. Calling to my brave comrade, I exclaim: 'Three for each of us; the rest for the dogs.'

"One receives an arrow from my squire, who cannot remain tranquil at his post, and, despite his wound, has run to possess himself of the arms of those whom we have slain, and has flanked the enemy. A second falls. The horseman dashes at me. I elude him, and, with one stroke of my axe, hamstring his horse, which falls on the pile of dead.

" 'Seize him, Dhu!'

"And my faithful animal springs upon the captain, who is prevented from rising by his heavy armor. My dog holds him down by the throat. There are still five.

" 'Make them prisoners, cries Kad-Aneith.'

"But the arrows of Kad-Wir kill two. With a blow of the handle of his sword my companion stuns another. The last two throw themselves flat upon the ground and ask quarter.

" 'Slaves,' said Kad-Aneith, 'arise and carry our trophies.'

"By the light of the fire I see him, with Kad-Wir's aid, take the locks of the slain.

" 'Yield,' I say to the leader, whom Dhu was strangling.

"He hands me his sword, and I bid the dog release him; and, after tying his feet, I run to the spot where I have left Callirhoé's corpse.

"Oh, terror and happiness united! she had risen, pale as a spectre, but her eyes are open, and she is no longer stiff and frozen; she breathes; she lives. She cannot yet walk, but she recognizes me, and says in feeble tones:—

"' Markek, I am very cold!'

"I carry her to the glowing hay-stack. I call Kad-Aneith and Kad-Wir. I show them my beloved still living; but the spoils and bloody trophies which they are collecting interest them much more. Callirhoé, by degrees, recovers herself, but cannot yet understand what has happened. I hear a troop advancing through the darkness, and I fear a new fight; happily I recognize friends in the new-comers; it is a Boran chief who had left us in the morning, and who, at the distant noise of the battle, has retraced his steps. We reach the camp without meeting any more enemies. I find my Gauls beaten and discouraged. Wir-Dhu-Mar had been killed, and Karnach blamed us for not listening to him. It was a fine time for reproaches! Our return, our trophies, our prisoners, and, above all, our friends the Boii, revived their courage.

"After inviting the Boii and all the chieftains to a grand feast for the morrow, and having charged Kad-Wir to watch the prisoners, I carry Callirhoé to my hut. Scarcely have I placed her upon my camp bed, when I find myself fainting. It was only then that I perceived myself to be wounded. I am losing blood. It is now Callirhoé's turn to save my life. Despite her weakness, she rises and calls for aid. None of my people know anything of the art of medicine, and they tell her that Karnach alone knows a formula of words which can cure wounds. Shrugging her shoulders, Callirhoé orders Kad-Wir to bathe my wounds while she

seeks beyond the camp for certain herbs. I will not allow her to go forth alone. I order an escort for her ; and though very feeble, I stanch my own blood. I rely too much upon my strength ; I faint again. When I opened my eyes I was extended upon my bear-skin bed, my body swathed in bandages, and waited upon by Kilnias and Callirhoé. Kad-Wir was talking to my dogs while dressing their wounds and his own with a salve of which the aromatic odor perfumes my hut. A few days afterwards, thanks to the care of my beautiful Etruscan, we were all cured.

"Gallic tribes who had lingered to ravage the country around Rome, pass constantly. Nearly ten thousand Senoni and Boii had united with us in the resolve to attack Arretium. Our armies surrounded the city. Kad-Aneith and I, followed by thirty warriors carrying at the end of their pikes the heads and the locks of the Arretines slain in our nocturnal combat, advance to the walls.

"'Arretines,' I say to the inhabitants who crowd the ramparts, and showing them our bloody trophies, 'see what two fleeing Gauls could accomplish. Judge of what ten thousand will be capable when rushing to victory. Fear the fate of Rome ! Purchase pardon for your treason and for your insults by sending a thousand pounds of gold, a thousand beeves, a thousand sheep, and as many sacks of wheat.'

"I receive for answer an arrow, which I elude. Taking from the hands of my squire our national flag—red, white, and blue—I shout :—

"'To the assault !'

"The moats are filled, the ladders raised against the walls, the gates forced or burned, and we are in Arretium. Kad-Aneith and I, followed by our clans, fall

upon the enemy, who, massed in columns, defend the main street of the city. The lucumon, in glittering armor, stands upon his chariot of war, encouraging his soldiers. A rain of arrows and javelins is showered upon us from every quarter, and blood flows in streams. Kad-Aneith's horse falls, and in its fall crushes its rider. I fly to the aid of my friend; but the lucumon from the top of his chariot dashes his steel-headed lance through his breast and drives the chariot over his body. Kad-Aneith will not rise again. A thirst for vengeance seizes me. I overthrow all who oppose me. I rush at the perfidious lucumon, and with a blow of my heavy sword I dis sever his head from his body. I display the bloody trophy to the Arretines; terror seizes them; they hesitate, they falter, they are beaten. The Gauls pursue them from street to street, into their houses and temples. The statues of the gods are broken, the men who do not yield are mercilessly massacred, the women are carried off, the houses pillaged and ransacked; after which, driving before us chariots, provisions, cattle, and slaves, we break up our camp of Biturigia, and recross the mountains with the Senoni. Kilnias and his daughter, whose property and slaves I have caused to be respected, voluntarily accompany us, with their household gods, and settle in the midst of my clan on the borders of the Andria.

"The news of our return was already spread through Gaul. All the nation assembled to receive us, and praise our victories so that our march is one continued triumph! What feasting and drinking have we not to undergo! What sacrifices to the gods! What recitals of combats to make! The most touching ovation was that offered by the tribes in our forest of An-

dria. The Druids, the Druidesses, the ovates, and the bards came before us at Krazy-Aven (the rock of inspiration *Crevant*), a consecrated spot on the boundary between the Biturigian country and that of the Cambron (Chambon). Dhu-Lug, in his rank of brenne, had collected around him a new generation of youthful warriors, who were but children when we left. But how many of us had remained beyond the mountains! The women, the children, the old men, sought amid our ranks husbands, fathers, sons. Tears of joy or of grief flowed from all eyes.

“That evening, before camping for the night, the Druids sacrificed to Teutates upon the *high stone of fire*—those stones of Crevant which still bear the name of *lap-ar-el*. The bards sang the glorious exploits of the living, and the praises of the dead heroes of our expedition. Dun-Glan, Kad-Aneith, and Wir-Dhu-Mar had been left on the field of battle. I returned alone; and of all the friends whom I had left in the country, I found but Margareth, the Druidess. ‘Die or return conqueror,’ she had said to me at the moment of my departure, and her eyes seemed to promise me her friendship, perhaps her love, as the recompense of my valor. But since I had met Callirhoé no other image had visited my dreams. After the religious ceremonies, Margareth made me a sign to approach her.

“‘You left a knight, you return a chieftain, as I commanded. You know that my vows as priestess of the Mistletoe do not forbid my choosing a husband; but I do not know whether it has been for glory only, or for love of me, that you have fought and travelled, and I can only belong to one in whose heart these two loves are united.’

"Margareth's beauty had become dazzling. Her fair skin and her golden hair made her look like a morning sunbeam, or rather a divinity of superior order, who could not descend to the cares and labors of terrestrial life. If Callirhoé embraced in herself all the gifts of civilization, all voluptuous graces, all the ardors of youth, the Druidess, with her spotless garments and her beautiful flowing hair twined with leaves, appeared to me the genius of our virgin forests, and her beauty the child of a nature eternally renewed. She was more and less than my beautiful slave. Deprived of the prestige which art and industry gave, she was like a perfume of the earth, like an emanation of this primitive life, which man may modify, but cannot make more beautiful or more holy.

"I felt these feelings confusedly, and I could not express them; for if I possessed many new ideas, if I knew how to speak strange languages, if I brought into our still uncivilized world the elements of material progress, in the world of the south I had learned nothing of the truly religious, and Margareth, guardian of our sacred traditions and of our intellectual knowledge, inspired me with mingled emotions of awe and respect.

"'August virgin! you see in me a new man, who has always honored your memory, but who belongs no more to the past. The great spirit has fixed my destiny; but if you do not find me unworthy to be your brother, accord me that title, and treat as your sister the companion whom I have brought from the land of the sun.'

"'I cannot be the sister of the stranger,' replied Margareth, softly. 'I foresee that she brings hither

evil and good. Our knowledge teaches us to follow the law of change, since this law, gentle or cruel, conducts us to a more perfect life. For I, who have loved you, can no longer understand you, nor communicate to you my soul. I will return to the shades of our verdant sanctuaries. Respect them, at least until the day arrives when they must fall under the axe. A prophetic spirit often warns me of what inevitably menaces them. The day is not distant when this land will seem too narrow for your innumerable descendants, and when these venerable trees, which to-day shelter *our* race, will be regarded by *future* races as encumbrances. I would live and die beneath their shades; would remain a virgin, and sleep in the faith of the Gauls until awakened to another existence. There, Markek, we will meet, if your soul is free, and the love of Margareth, to-day unfruitful, will become for you genial and revivifying like the dews of a new dawn.'

"She spoke and passed from my sight with a calm smile and gentle look of farewell. I followed her with my eyes until she was lost among the moss-grown and lichen-covered rocks. Twice she disappeared amid the labyrinthine masses of granite; twice she reappeared, ascending from point to point. At length she passed, shadow-like, beneath the branches of the sacred oaks, and was lost amid their thick and drooping branches.

"I had only experienced a vague, shadowy sentiment of love for her, such as is inspired by a young and beautiful being in all youthful hearts. I loved Callirhoé with all the strength and fire of manhood, and cared for no other woman. This love left room for no other feeling, for no regret; yet Margareth's

farewell, and her prediction, created in me an indescribable sadness, a strange remorse, as if the divinity of the Gauls had reproached me with having devoted myself by an impious oath to the service of the gods Cabires, and to an eternal alliance with the stranger. I contemplated long the majestic forests where the virgin had buried herself, and of which she had seemed to condemn me to be the destroyer. Filled for an instant with horror at the thought of such sacrilege, I trembled to my inmost soul, and was tempted to bury myself in these austere shades, sacred guardian of the past. But Callirhoé approached and awakened me from this sombre revery. Her living, sparkling beauty dissipated my agony. Kilnias called me, to consult me on his establishment in the country. In the midst of the chariots which bore his riches, and of the numerous servants who conducted the horses, the noise, the movement, the cares, the duties, and the interests of active life recalled me to my mission of instructor. As a foreigner, Kilnias could not acquire land in Gaul in his own name. In order to aid him, I had to take him under my care, and before the vergobruths he swore faith and homage to me. He was not enslaved by this act, for he had liberty to leave the country, but he had not the right to wear a sword like the Celt, the native proprietor. Callirhoé, like the women of all countries, was free the moment she touched our soil.

“Under the management of the new-comers, the country soon changed its aspect. Plains of broom and fern were converted into wheat-fields and meadows of clover. A stone mansion with columns and porticos in the Etruscan style arose as if by enchantment. In place of mud and thatched huts, the slaves and depen-

dents of Kilnias built their houses of stone. The surrounding forests were transformed into parks and gardens; the marsh was converted into fish-ponds, or into flowing streams which turned our mills. Iron ore, which filled the country, was gathered, and Brigg (Brives) resounded with the hammers of the slaves—Cyclops forging and hammering iron night and day. Fresh roads wound through the country; travellers and traders more numerous than of old came to traffic with us. Kilnias and Callirhoé had brought civilization into our midst. They had at first to encounter ill-will and distrust, and the jealousy of those who looked upon these improvements as the result of magic and enchantment. The Druids, more just and more enlightened, protected the strangers, even tolerating their worship of the gods Cabires, which had great similarity with some of our ancient religious ceremonies. My clan had become an Etruscan Gallic colony, and more than one youthful Biturigis did not disdain the love of the strangers. Amongst others, the proud Hénora, Dun-Glan's widow, received the homage of a young Arretine chief, him whom I had conquered on the night of our defeat before Arretium. Our warriors lost by degrees their contempt for the beauties of the south, and the brunette Callirhoé was soon the most fashionable and courted of the young women of the country, as much from the strange charm of her presence, her wisdom, and her adventures, as from the immense wealth which her father had brought with him into Gaul.

“In the eyes of her lovers, I had no more rights than they had. She was ostensibly free, and Kilnias was constantly solicited for her hand. At length, one day, assembling all aspirants, he gave a great feast, during

which Callirhoé, according to a Gallic custom, was to make choice of a husband. Dhu-Lug had divorced his wife and entered the field, in order to obtain the hand of the rich Etruscan. Here, in the villa of Kilnias, of which the foundations have supported twenty successive edifices, and which perhaps lie beneath the soil on which we stand, the notables, the chiefs of clans, the principal farmers, with their wives and children, attended the ceremony of betrothal. While awaiting the guests, I wander through the gardens adorned with statues and fountains of flowing water. The walks are bordered with trees, cut in pyramids, cones, and other fantastic shapes. The guests arrive and meet in the festal chamber. The walls are decorated with paintings, each one representing a different subject. Here is Isis with a cow's head, holding a sistrum; a black wolf licking an amphora; a goose picking at a flower; a cat with eagle's beak and wings; a blue dog with the bosom and head of a woman. The ceiling is divided into four compartments, painted blue; an unknown animal is in the centre. The large horse-shoe-shaped table, which reaches round the room, is covered with flowers, as well as is the red, white, and black mosaic pavement. In the four corners are high censers of gilded bronze. There are six heralds intrusted with the arrangement of the guests according to their rank or merit. Women occupy the couches on the right of Callirhoé, who is enveloped in a flame-colored veil. On her left is the empty place of honor to be filled by the husband of her choice. Kilnias, Dhu-Lug, I, and the rest of the men are seated on brocade-cushioned benches. The feast is superb. I am not as ignorant as at the lucumon's, and I can appreciate the arrangement. It is divided into three

courses: the first, wines and sauces; the second, light dishes sharpening to the appetite; at the third, which is the principal course, each guest has before him a fat chicken, boar's flesh, hare, fried fish, wheat cakes, and other dishes that may be carried home. Wine circulates freely, and soon the guests grow excited.

" 'This chair has been too long vacant,' exclaims Dhu-Lug, pointing to the seat of honor. 'The beautiful Italian must take the cup, and choose the fortunate warrior who is to sit beside her.'

" 'Why do you not place yourself in it?' in a tone of raillery, asks Muig-Can (white cloud), a handsome, fair young man with long moustache.

" Dhu-Lug was about to reply, but Callirhoé rises and says in pure Gallic:—

" 'None of the young chieftains who have pretensions to my hand are ignorant that I owe my presence among them at this moment to Markek Wald-Righ. Twice has he saved my life, and had I not long loved him, I ought at least to prove my gratitude by choosing him as my husband. Wald-Righ, take the cup from my hand, and come and seat yourself beside your affianced—your wife, to-day before men, as she has already been before the gods!'

" Taking the cup, she raises it to her lips and then offers it to me. Her women relieve her of her veil, and she stands dressed in white, decked with necklaces and bracelets, and wearing a high crown of gold and a breastplate sparkling with gems.

" Her followers bring a tripod into the hall; two white lambs without blemish are killed, and flutists accompany the religious ceremonies. A piece of the victim's flesh is offered to each of the competitors, who resign themselves to eating and drinking. After this,

all prepare to conduct us to the conjugal abode—that is to say, to my home. Kilnias, a white pine torch in hand, leads the march; a chorus of musicians and young maidens, each holding a torch of the fir-tree, precede us. The women, the other claimants, and the guests close the *cortège*. At the door of my house they stop, and a corypheus sings to the music of the flutes a poem in praise of Hymen, while I give to Callirhoé, seated on a sheepskin, an iron nuptial ring, a distaff, a key, and a dish upon which Kilnias and I throw some gold-pieces: it is the emblem of my wife's dowry, and my goods and chattels thrown into the common lot. Kilnias kisses his daughter upon the forehead, the torches are extinguished the moment Callirhoé crosses the threshold of my house. I dismiss the Etruscan ladies, who pretend to have information for my wife. I have had enough of all these ceremonies, unused in Gaul, except that of the cup.

“My humble dwelling being unworthy of my young bride, I went to live with my father-in-law. Callirhoé desires to consecrate our union before her mysterious gods, by renewing the ceremonies performed at Arretium, the day upon which our oaths were indelibly graven upon the bracelet, emblem of her slavery, which she still wore and refused to give up. This time the Oscan letters appear graven upon a bronze table, which she had caused to be fastened to the wall at the foot of our bed.

“I did not offer any opposition to Callirhoé's wishes. She ruled me with sovereign power, and though her Cabires inspired me with disgust rather than belief, I never thought of objecting. Nevertheless, I felt at the close of this day the same sadness that had filled me while listening to Margareth's adieus. It was a

vague feeling, a mysterious fatigue of life. It seemed to me that my destiny was accomplished, and that I should not be faithful to my mission if I followed it further. I was proud, certainly, of the results of our conquest, the augmentation of our wealth and our energy, but I did not feel the less sad when I saw the axe busy in our noble forests, and the plough, hour by hour and furrow by furrow, diminishing our hunting-grounds, once limitless and unnamed. I was cruelly divided between an obstinate love of the virgin earth, and a feverish longing for improvement. One day I buried myself alone in the forest; I wished yet once again to look upon the old trees that I had myself condemned to disappear to satisfy the new husbandman. When I had penetrated deep into the pathless forest, my sadness turned to violent bitterness; I hated myself. A prey to a childish struggle between two opposing instincts, I asked myself whether it would not be better to destroy the ploughshare than to level the groves. Then, ashamed of my ignorant prejudices, and wishing to dare the mysterious influence of the sacred oaks, I seized my axe and struck a furious blow at the trunk of a colossus of the woods. A plaintive sigh seemed to come from the heart of the tree. A cold sweat bathed my limbs, the axe dropped from my hands, I fell upon my knees, and closed my eyes to avoid seeing some terrible apparition, when a gentle voice called me by name. Raising my head, I saw before me the beautiful and holy Margareth, pallid as the white violets twined in her hair.

“ ‘Friend,’ said she, ‘the time has come. The spirit of divination, which has never deceived me, sends me to deliver you. I sought in this condemned forest the inspiration which your presence brings me. Heaven

sends you here, Markek; Heaven leads me hither. Let us weep no more over what destiny has done. The soul of the great oak receives its deliverance from man, since all life renews itself and is completed by death. Think of yourself, my dear Markek; think of delivering yourself, you who believed that you could link yourself to the yoke of fatality. Abandon the worship of death, and believe not that you can dispose of your soul like a gift which one confers upon a wife or a friend. The great spirit makes everything advance with irresistible force, and man cannot decide his own future. There is a torrent which sweeps him beyond his provisions, and mocks his guilty will. My words seem obscure; you will soon understand them, Markek. Soon your soul, freed from the gloom of the present, will re-enter the eternal and ascending life of immortal beings. Yet you may remain in the sphere of *Abred* longer than you suppose. Break the impious vow, and aspire to the sphere of *Gwinfyd*, where I am going to await you, and where I shall try to attract you to myself.'

" 'What would you say,' I cried, 'and how do you know that an impious oath binds me to strange gods? Speak, youthful diviner! must I soon die? And you, why do you speak of preceding me in another existence?'

"The virgin of the Mistletoe still smiled, but paled like a vanishing shadow.

" 'Do you not see that I am dying?' replied she, raising the long black drapery which covered her white robes, and showing me a great stain of blood under her left arm. 'You thought that you struck the oak, Markek, and it was I that you killed. You did not see me, or you took me for some maleficent

genius. Go! I pardon and thank you. My hour has come. It is sweet to die by your hand; it is sweet to die in this doomed forest, of which the ruins will tomorrow strew the earth where I have disappeared. Go, Markek! you must not see a virgin of the Mistletoe die. Our death and our life are mysteries that no profane eye dares contemplate. Go, I command you! We shall soon meet again, Markek.'

"While she spoke, the horrible spot of blood spread rapidly, and the tottering Druidess was obliged to lean against the tree.

"'No! I will not leave you alone to die; I will strive to save you.'

"'Well,' she replied, in voice soft as summer's breeze, 'hasten to the right, to yon thicket, and you will find my companions; summon them to me.'

"I ought to have understood that. Margareth was deceiving me, for no Druidess has ever revealed the secret of those retreats in which their sisterhood conceal themselves from the eyes of the profane. I ran towards the spot, I rushed hither and thither; I sprang into the midst of the bushes, shouting and calling aloud; I found but the silence of the desert. I returned bewildered towards Margareth. She was gone. I sought her everywhere till night. In vain! Ten times I believed myself again at the foot of the tree where I had dropped my axe; but was it indeed the same tree? My axe had also disappeared, and the grass, where I believed that I had seen footprints and some drops of blood, bore no traces of the vision. I have always been ignorant, I am ignorant yet, whether I dreamed the appearance of the Druidess, and whether I was the cause of her death."

"Oh, no! it could not be," cried Marguerite, inter-

rupting my recital. "No, Mark, it was your imagination."

Marguerite's interruption disturbed my memory, and several minutes elapsed ere I could bring it back. At last, persuaded by her and Fanny, I seized the thread and continued my relation of the events following these scenes in the forest.

"True, true," I replied, "it was an hallucination, I hope; and it was impossible for me to assure myself of it, for the next day—the very next day—I went to hunt with Dhu-Lug, and never returned.

"Dhu-Lug, contrary to my expectations, showed no bitterness towards me for my having been elected brenn by the national will in preference to him, nor for Callirhoé's choice of me. His generosity touched me, and we had become friends, though my wife had warned me to beware of him. She believed him cowardly and perfidious, but I did not share her suspicions. We had resolved to call a meeting of our warriors to have a grand boar batten, as these animals were devastating our fields. Everything is ready; we start on horseback; the horns resound through the forest; our dogs have started a sow and her brood. Dhu-Lug and I, eager in her pursuit, are in advance of the rest, and we direct our course towards the thicket where I hear the dogs baying. My poor Tan, his belly ripped open by the tusks of the animal, dies under my eyes. Spear in hand, I rush towards the beast; my frightened horse falls, and my leg is caught under him. I call Dhu-Lug to my aid.

"Laughing in a sinister manner, he answers:—

"'Markek, the opportunity of making Callirhoé a widow is too good. I cannot let it pass.'

"I make violent efforts to disengage myself from

the body of the horse ; but the traitor has hamstrung him. The sow rushes upon me, despite my dog Dhu, who clings to her throat. Nevertheless, I do not despair of killing her. When she comes within reach, I transfix her in the throat with my spear ; she falls, crushing me with her weight.

“ ‘Dhu-Lug,’ I cry, ‘do not let me stifle here ! If I have angered you, I will fight you.’

“But the coward, who had fled at the approach of danger, returns, dismounts, and the blade of his long knife gleams in my eyes. I feel a terrible pain in my breast, which forces from me a sharp cry of anguish. My sufferings become so violent that I feel nothing more ; I stifle ; a black veil spreads itself before my eyes—”

“And then ?” asked Marguerite, breathlessly.

“Then, Marguerite, then—” I answered confusedly, “I remember no more. I was dead.”

There was a long silence about me. I do not know who interrupted it ; I only know that it was not Marguerite. I was exhausted and overcome by lassitude, as if I had entered after my recital into some expectant phase of an existence which was neither that of Markek-Wald-Righ, nor that of Mark Valery. Nevertheless, I had not slept in the interim between these two manifestations of my eternal life. What have I been in the immense interval which separates them ? It is strange that I do not find myself elsewhere than here !

I cannot account to myself for the effect of my recital upon my listeners. Marguerite dreamed ; Fanny smiled ; my uncle said that it was probable the Etruscans had buried treasures under the foundations of his house. Mme. d’Astafort seriously discussed the point with him. I heard confusedly this interchange

of their *naïve* reflections. As we separated, Fanny said:—

“You have mingled the past with the present very skilfully. We recognize Carnat and his dog, your squire Kadour, your friend Cadanet. Callirhoé lives, perhaps, in Africa! But Dhu-Lug, your enemy and assassin, who is he? May we not know?”

“I have no idea,” I answered.

“I know,” she replied, “but I will not tell you.”

Marguerite retired early, to be ready for the morrow’s hunt. I also made it a pretext for retiring to my room, to write my story, while it was yet fresh in my memory, as I might otherwise forget it. I fell asleep with the calmness of a man relieved of a burden.

26th September. This morning, by four o’clock, the guests and echoes of St. Jean were awakened by the sound of horns, the baying of hounds, and the cries of the whippers-in. Mme. d’Astafort and her daughter made us wait awhile; but by five o’clock we had started for the woods of Ramier. The sun rose in crimson clouds, in a gray fleecy sky. Some dilatory huntsmen joined us upon the heath—Boc was of the number; he had invented a whimsical hunting garb, and, whip in hand, he pranced on his lean sorrel-colored horse before Mlle. d’Astafort, whom he still tries to please. But it must be admitted that he did not shine in presence of the marquis, who, in velvet hunting-jacket, booted and spurred, whip in hand, a flower at his button-hole, his hunting-horn sticking out, his knife at his side, a loose neck-tie, and black cap tipped over his nose, only needed a feather to play the gentleman in the comic opera. Whistling hunting tunes, calling his dogs by every name in canine mar-

tyrology, patting his horse and making him prance, he was radiant with satisfaction. He was showing off all his advantages and all his allurements. Marguerite did not look at him, but he believed himself admired and appreciated. He could not doubt but that he was making a lasting impression upon her. She was charming, my Marguerite, in her riding-habit; she managed her horse fearlessly and skilfully. Mme. d'Astafort, inhaling the morning air with open mouth, followed at a little distance behind in a carriage with M. Désormes, driven by Dolin.

The hunt opened at six o'clock by the dogs starting a hare. The animal left the wood of Ramiers, and led the chase to the forest of Bommiers. M. de Mauvezin signalled that he saw the hare, and darted off at full speed. Marguerite, Fanny, and I followed leisurely. Raoul de Vinceaux joined us, and, to avoid raising his suspicions, I allowed him to escort my cousin, and ride a little in advance with her. Fanny by degrees slackened her pace, till by a sudden movement she threw her horse upon his haunches, and let herself slip to the ground. She was very pale.

"What is the matter? Are you in pain?" I asked, dismounting.

"Yes," she replied, in a faint voice, "in great pain."

"I will call Mlle. Désormes to your aid."

"No, no! I do not need her. Fasten the horses, and let me rest a few moments."

I obeyed, while she seated herself on a fallen tree.

"You are a great friend," she continued. "I have been angry at you for eight days, and you have not noticed it."

“Why were you angry?”

“Because you did not keep our bargain. You and Marguerite are so imprudent that one would have to be blind not to see your love. I ought also to warn you of the result of your seeming coldness towards me.”

I asked, smiling, what new misfortune menaced me.

“Before I tell you, answer me! Mark, you distrust me?”

I thought it useless to try and deceive so close an observer, and avowed frankly that her starting Marguerite's horse so suddenly some days before had led me to reflect.

“You are wise to answer me frankly. You have noticed that Marguerite sometimes irritates me with her imperious airs and childish manner; but I do not deserve your accusations of unkindness towards yourself. They really pain me. Does that surprise you? It is because I am not like other women. Am I better or worse? I do not know. Since I have possessed your friendship, it seems to me that I have been less wicked, and if Heaven had granted that I should know love, I should become entirely good; but these are dreams. I will not stop to think of them. It concerns your interests. Listen to me! Day before yesterday my mother again spoke to me of her projects, reproaching me for being cold towards you, and saying that I must decide at once. Your uncle had intended to oblige you to declare your intentions, if you had not been absent to-day. He has determined that Marguerite's marriage shall take place on the 15th of next month, October, and is anxious that the two weddings shall take place on that day. It is his

fixed determination. You can no longer delay a definite explanation with him."

"I cannot," I replied, "volunteer an explanation which no one demands of me. My uncle has acted so strangely that one must be rude with him not to encourage him in his illusions. You say that he has fixed the day for his daughter's wedding, without even asking if she likes the intended bridegroom; and he has also determined that I shall marry you on the same day, without having made any offer to you on my part?"

"It is so," replied Fanny. "He has arranged everything with my mother. He expects that to-day, during some accidental or well-contrived *tête-à-tête*, Mauvezin will persuade Marguerite to accept him; and he expects also that I, on my part, shall commend myself to you to-day, by giving you to understand that I love you. These are M. Désormes' *coups de tête*. He is the roughest, the most awkward, and at the same time the most timid of men when it comes to the point."

"Well, if my noble uncle has lost his wits, we must aid him to regain them, my dear Fanny. I know what I have to do in relation to Marguerite; but *you*, you will not, I hope, compel me to take the initiative in what relates to you. You will tell him frankly that you do not and never will love me, and consequently do not wish me to love you."

Fanny did not answer. She buried her face in her hands, and burst into tears. I was astonished, yet grieved and inquieted, by Fanny's grief.

"What is the matter, dear Fanny?" I said, trying to take her hands, which she placed before her mouth to stifle her sobs. "How have I offended you?"

What do you see in my conduct that belies the respect and esteem that I feel for you? Your tears show that I have wounded your heart by my suspicions. Forgive me, and believe that I wish to be your sincere and devoted friend."

"Mark," she answered, energetically, "I have no friend. I can never have a friend, no more than I can have a husband. I am alone in the world, and ever shall be. I am poor."

"Poor!" I exclaimed. "You think it is Marguerite's wealth that makes me give her the preference." I was about to tell her that I was already richer than my cousin; but I remembered, and stopped in time. "Know that I loved her before I saw you—loved her from childhood. I have never loved any other. She is my first, my only love."

Fanny felt that I spoke the truth, and drew herself up proudly, saying:—

"You have defended your dignity, allow me to defend mine. Marguerite is a child, raised in the idea of the importance of her money. I have a contempt for it. I hate it; and the more that it is the object of the worship of all those who are about me, and that it has made a desert for me."

"It is possible, Fanny, it is possible for ruined marquises, for de Mauvezins; but for me—"

"Who is speaking of de Mauvezin?" she cried, rising, and fixing her large lurid eyes upon me.

Does she love Mauvezin? The situation from every point was so painful and delicate that I dared not ask her, but thought I might venture to assure her that Marguerite would never marry Mauvezin.

"You deceive yourself," she replied, impetuously, "he will marry her in three weeks; he will marry her

on the 15th of October. Marguerite knows it, and I am surprised that she has not informed you."

"It is because she knows nothing of the project, or—"

"Or else does not wish to grieve you uselessly. But, do what you will, you must give up Marguerite; she dares not, she does not wish to resist her father."

"If so, there is an easy solution of our difficulties. I will kill Mauvezin."

"Ah, my poor friend, say that he will kill you. The marquis has learned but three things in his life—to ride a horse, to handle a sword, and to shoot a pistol; and in these three things he excels. Even if you should kill him, that will give you neither his title nor his fortune, which, though small compared to Marguerite's, is large compared to yours."

She seemed to speak of Mauvezin with pride, and was perhaps desirous of intimidating me, to prevent my quarrelling with him."

"You smile," continued Fanny; "of what are you thinking?"

"Of you, Mlle. d'Astafort, and M. de Mauvezin."

"Ah!" she replied, sitting down as if overcome, "what do you say?"

"Well, I do not believe that de Mauvezin has never courted you."

Deathly pale, she looked at me steadily, while answering in harsh tones: "The marquis has never courted me."

I strove to read the truth in her eyes.

"Why do you look at me thus?" she said. "You make me afraid. Let us go."

I helped her to her saddle, and we rode on. After a gallop, Mlle. d'Astafort broke the silence by asking

me if I really thought M. de Mauvezin had ever cared for her.

I admitted that Marguerite and de Mauvezin had both hinted at it. She defended herself by ridiculing the marquis. I had never seen her so bitter and satirical; but there may have been as much spite as disdain in her words. We rejoined the party, who were awaiting us in order to begin a rustic breakfast. Fanny was overflowing with wit and animation during the repast. She made me observe the absurdities of the marquis, who, as master of the hounds, entertained us, in the choicest language of the stable, with accounts of his own prowess.

Breakfast was hardly over, when a flourish on the horn announced that a boar had been started. The huntsmen were soon mounted and off, and the hunt was renewed with redoubled vigor. Marguerite and Fanny preferring to rest, let the carriage leave without them. Raoul and I stayed with them.

It would have been very easy for Mlle. d'Astafort to accord Marguerite and me a moment's private conversation. Raoul seemed to divine the truth, and was very willing; but Fanny watched Marguerite as if she had promised M. Désormes to guard his daughter. She would have prevented us, if possible, from exchanging glances, and her face wore a strange expression of malice.

"Marguerite," said she, suddenly, "of what are you dreaming?"

"Do I look like a dreamer?" replied Marguerite.

"More than that, you look as self-absorbed, as Mark did last evening after his famous story of Callirhoé."

"What!" said I, in my turn, "have you not yet forgotten that tedious and absurd recital?"

"I have not forgotten one word," answered Marguerite.

"No," replied Fanny, "she will think long of Callirhoé."

"I like Callirhoé," exclaimed Marguerite; "she interests me, and I wish I knew what became of her after Markek's death."

I declared that I was absolutely ignorant.

"Then," said Fanny, "you were never Markek, for he loved too much not to return to the world, if only for her sake; and I am sure that if in another world he met the Gallic Margareth again, she would have to suffer once more on his account."

Fanny added a thousand sarcasms which tended to excite Marguerite's jealousy, and to lead her to believe that I had in my mind a type of beauty far more seductive than hers. Raoul, not understanding the drift of the conversation, withdrew to look after our horses, which were in the charge of his servant.

"Look, Mark," said Fanny, "reassure Marguerite; she is flushed, and ready to cry with anger. Tell her that you only adroitly arranged your romance to soothe M. Désormes' suspicions, and make him perceive in your disdain for the fair-haired Druidess a protest against the feeling which two years ago so angered him. Had you been less overcome by the intoxication of your improvisation, you would have seen your uncle *jubilant*, as my mother says, at the passage in which you seemed to say to his daughter that you renounce her forever."

"Mark said the reverse," cried Marguerite; "the Gallic girl and he expected to be reunited in another world."

"Yes, yes!" replied Fanny, "throw yourself upon

hopes of a future state. Father Désormes won't bother himself about the plans of eternity."

"Fanny," answered Marguerite, angrily, "my dear child, I fear that you will always remain alone, and that by your own fault. You love so much to give pain to others."

Raoul fortunately rejoined us at the moment.

"From what I can understand," said he, "of what you were just now speaking, Mark yesterday related a singular history, of which he declared himself to be the hero."

I explained that I had given rein to my fancy, and that Mlle. d'Astafort had pretended to see in it allusions to reality.

"Ah, indeed!" replied Fanny; "but as you spoke you pretended to refer to your memory."

"Could you have believed in such a jest?"

"My mother believes it firmly; but I saw that you were inventing, and I declare the more positively that Callirhoé is your dream, your ideal."

"Mark, I want to speak to you," said Marguerite, quickly.

Taking my arm with the courage of truthfulness, she led me aside, without deigning to notice Fanny, who darted her witticisms after us.

"Friend," she said, "I do not know if you were inventing or relating; tell me the truth."

"I do not know myself," I replied. "I seemed transported in good faith, in spite of myself, into a region which appeared to be that of memory; but after having slept soundly upon it—for I was very much fatigued—I vow to you that I can be sure of nothing. I believe that I merely reduced to order a crowd of events drawn from my miscellaneous read-

ings; I do not pretend to be endowed with an exceptional faculty."

"Mark," cried my darling Marguerite, "let me believe that you are possessed of this extraordinary faculty; it delights me. I am also romantic, and I also imagine that I was a Druidess in past times. This explains to me my passionate love for our noble trees, and my delicious dreams under their shady branches."

"Take care, Marguerite; it is dangerous to yield ourselves up to the caprices of the imagination."

"Do not fear," she replied, "I will not go too far. I leave one door of my primitive forest open upon the land of reality, and with the others I can laugh, if they wish it, at all this; but with you I wish to talk often, and to say, '*Who knows?*' It is true, I did suffer a little when you spoke of your love for the beautiful Etruscan, and the cruel Fanny guessed it; but my father did not understand that Marguerite reigned above all others in your heart, and that, moreover, we were destined for each other forever."

"Yes, my dearly loved, for you only! for you forever!"

At this moment one of the whippers-in came with a message from de Mauvezin, saying that the boar had led the hunt to the swamps of Alloigny, in the forest of Cheurs, and that if we wished to be in at the death, we must hurry thither. We started at once, and I took advantage of the canter to ask my cousin if her father had informed her of the day fixed for her wedding? She knew nothing of it, and, in place of being uneasy, as I feared, was much irritated.

"Ah! St. Theresa's Day, the 15th of October, the *fête* of my poor mother, has been chosen. It is, without doubt, to show her how her wishes are respected,

marrying me to other than you! My father believes his projects are accomplished; he does not even consult me; he thinks me too much a child to have a will. Let him go on and believe that I have no will, we shall see;" and she struck her horse angrily with her whip.

We arrived in time to be in at the death. The boar had turned at bay, and had wounded several of the dogs, when Mauvezin advanced against him on foot. The animal rushed furiously at his new foe, who dexterously avoided the charge and plunged his hunting-knife into the brute. The blade entered to the hilt; the boar staggered and fell dead. The huntsmen shouted, dogs barked, horns sounded triumphantly; it was a real triumph. The marquis deserved praise, but I was jealous when I saw that Marguerite admired his skill and courage. Fanny looked at him with clenched teeth, and I thought that she, too, was jealous of this slayer of wild beasts.

Heavy black clouds obscured the sun, and a few large drops of rain warned us to seek shelter from a coming storm.

M. de Mauvezin, his face radiant with pride, begged Mme. d'Astafort and M. Désormes to seek shelter at Chizé, as his mother, the marchioness, would be delighted to receive them. I surprised glances of intelligence. M. Désormes accepted, and without consulting Marguerite, handed her to the carriage. Fanny hesitated to enter at her mother's command, but Désormes pushed her before him, and the carriage started for Chizé. The huntsmen followed through a pelting rain. I had a great mind to return to St. Jean; but the sudden invitation seemed to me like a trap, and I followed the carriage. We were more than a

league from Chizé, and it was almost night when we arrived. M. Désormes and his companions went into the drawing-room, while those on horseback, wetted to the skin, had to dry themselves in the kitchen, where we made a fire large enough to burn down the house. The chimney would have roasted an ox whole; the fire-irons, bright from constant rubbing, represented two men-at-arms of the last century, casque on head and sword in hand.

The kitchen was of vast size; on the smoky walls hung the saucepans and copper vessels, which reflected the bright light from the hearth. Pots of fat were ranged in lines on the tops of the shelves; a cuckoo, in his long wooden box, made his regular tick-tack heard beside the noisy wheel of the turnspit. On the oak table stood the food ready to be served up, and the head cook, fat and sleek, with spoon in hand, gave his imperious orders to the two scullions with the majestic air of a Cæsar.

Our installation around the fire disturbed somewhat this Vitellius of the furnace; but he seemed pleased to have such appreciators of his talents as M. de la Chapelaud, who cried, "It is already eight o'clock, Master Louis, and I have the appetite of a wolf."

"That is not my fault, M. de Chapelaud; I was waiting for the arrival of the ladies to spit the beef. You know that you had better wait for dinner than to have dinner wait for you."

"They expected us, then?" I remarked to the doctor, who was near me.

"It seems that this was an anticipated surprise. There is a wheel within a wheel."*

* The French proverb is, "*Il y a anguille sous roche*"—literally, there is eel under rock.

"Ha!" said la Chapelaude, who was a little deaf, "you say we are to have eels? I love them dearly, and I have a desperate appetite."

"Empty stomach and no ears," whispered Raoul.

The kitchen-door opened, and a tall thin lady, bearing a lamp, entered and advanced slowly towards us. She was some fifty years old, with an inflexible face, small gray eyes, and thin lips. Her physiognomy was as long, cold, and shrivelled as her person; she looked like an umbrella, with her stiff, narrow, black dress, above which her small head and white wig appeared; her nose was like the beak of an eagle.

"It is the marchioness," whispered Raoul.

"Gentlemen," said she, "I regret not being able to supply each of you with a change of garment, and you must excuse my want of ceremony; but when you are dry, I hope that you will come to the parlor, where the ladies await you."

We were, if not dry, at least warmed. We followed our hostess to the parlor. It was a large, gloomy room, with bare walls, and ill-fitting windows, which every clap of thunder rattled in their worm-eaten casements. The wind drove the smoke and flame down the broken and ill-constructed chimney. All this showed provincial apathy, or a haughty regard for old customs. I should have preferred the kitchen in every respect.

Several persons whom I did not know were seated round the fire, amongst them a priest, curate of the parish, doubtless the marchioness' confessor, as she was a *devote*. Mme. d'Astafort, sitting very straight, was staring around. Fanny was cold and stiff, and seemed much annoyed. Marguerite appeared inclined to laugh. I saw her biting her lips to keep her countenance when our eyes met.

When we were seated, the priest hazarded a remark.

"What a disagreeable day!"

"I thank God for it," replied the marchioness, "as it has given me the honor of making the acquaintance of M. Désormes and his daughter."

Marguerite showed no recognition of the compliment, and pretended not to see her father's angry glance. He hastened to thank the marchioness, but at the end of three words language failed him. The conversation flagged.

"This gentleman is your nephew," said the marchioness to my uncle, bowing toward me. "An officer, without doubt?"

"Yes, madam," replied Marguerite, eagerly interrupting her father. "He is my cousin, Mark Valery, lieutenant of spahis. At the pass of Nita-el-Missia, he was wounded in capturing the enemy's colors, and received the Cross of the Legion of Honor."

The marchioness stared at Marguerite with astonishment, and, turning to me, complimented me stiffly.

"I am frozen," said my cousin, jumping up suddenly. Laying a stress upon the words, she added: "It is dreadfully cold *here!*"

M. de Mauvezin hurried forward to draw her chair nearer to the fire.

"Do not trouble yourself," she remarked, "I should still be frozen."

The marchioness stared at her in mute astonishment. Dinner being announced, we seated ourselves at the table. The priest and Mme. de Mauvezin crossed themselves. Mme. d'Astafort, who never thought of it at home, imitated them, in order to show her patrician taste. Marguerite did not follow

her example; her negligence was observed, which was just what she desired.

The dinner, or rather supper, was simple, but well cooked. The doctor discussed each course, and de la Chapelaude ate like a crocodile. My uncle was morose, and cast furtive glances on his daughter, on the marchioness, on de Mauvezin, and on me. The conversation grew livelier. They discussed the hunt, and then commenced to scandalize their neighbors, which in the provinces is a sure sign of a growing intimacy. The priest, who was very abstemious, was next to me. He asked many questions about M. Désormes and his daughter, amongst others, where Mlle. Désormes had been educated, and if she were really a Protestant, like her mother. I was about to answer, when Marguerite, who had heard him, raised her voice, and, with an assurance of which I had not believed her capable, answered:—

“Yes, sir! All the Valerys are Protestants.”

“I know that the Valerys are Protestants,” said the marchioness, “but the Désormeses, are not.”

“Oh, by my faith!” replied my uncle, with brusque frankness, “the Désormeses have no religion.”

“What!” cried the horrified priest, “you believe in nothing?”

“I believe in potatoes and turnips,” replied my uncle, with a laugh which he intended to be conciliatory, but which was received in profound silence. Marguerite, delighted to see her father compromise himself, added that she was very devoted, and very much attached to her *heresy*.

“Yet, mademoiselle,” replied the priest very ill-timedly, “some day, if you marry a Catholic, you must—”

"I shall never marry a Catholic," replied Marguerite, in a firm tone.

"Bah!" cried her father, "you know nothing about it, and you don't know of what you are talking."

Mme. d'Astafort tried to change the conversation; but the priest continued it with me. He boasted of Mme. de Mauvezin's merit, as if to make me feel the distance which separated a person so pious, so noble, so affable, and so distinguished in her words and actions from a little heretic, without birth, and much too cutting in her language. I was delighted with the good man's discourse, for he was ignorant of, or very much scandalized at, the marchioness' matrimonial schemes.

I heard Marguerite's voice at the other end of the table say to de Mauvezin: —

"I hear, marquis, that you are soon to be married. I must compliment you, though I do not know the lady's name. May I ask it now?"

"But—" he replied, hesitating, and looking at M. Désormes.

"Oh! if it is still a secret," she replied, quickly, "excuse my curiosity."

"No, mademoiselle," replied the marquis, with an impertinent smile, "my marriage was a secret, but, if you are desirous to know the lady's name, I will tell you after dinner."

"You need not trouble yourself; it does not interest me."

A new and embarrassing silence fell on all. I saw my uncle pale and redden by turns. Fanny looked at Marguerite with a stupefied air. Mme. de Mauvezin glanced at her son, who laughed at everything.

Raoul exerted himself in every way to dispel the social cloud.

Immediately after dinner, M. Désormes led Marguerite off. He was followed by Mme. de Mauvezin and her son. The priest did the honors and brought out the card tables. Raoul, who had guessed the truth, approached to sound me; but I hid my uneasiness, and withstood the assault. At the end of an hour Marguerite returned, pale and silent. Fanny interrogated her in whispers, but Marguerite repulsed her. Mme. de Mauvezin returned with her son, who wore a triumphant air. My uncle was flushed, and tried to be dignified. Everybody commenced to play cards, except my uncle, who approached me and Marguerite, who seated herself near Fanny, and feigned to be interested in her game.

I was before the fireplace, or rather in it. My uncle placed himself near me, upon one of the stone benches at the side. He assumed a confidential air, and said:—

“I do not know what has come over Marguerite; but she has had to speak and act. The marchioness wishes my money, and the little one has had to submit. It is fixed for the 15th. Come, decide in relation to Fanny. All can be arranged for the same day. It will save you wedding expenses.”

I believed myself the sport of a nightmare on seeing Raoul in a low tone complimenting the Marquis de Mauvezin, who received his felicitations with an inane countenance. My uncle rubbed his hands. Marguerite was sad and dejected. Does she already bow her head under the paternal will? Has her courage failed? She commenced so well! My hopes, my dreams of future happiness, the aim of my life, were crumbling

like a card-house. My patience, abnegation, devotion, were forgotten or set aside by Marguerite at her father's word. I was seized with a blind anger against her, her weakness, or her treachery, and I wished to embrace Fanny before her eyes—to engage myself to her. Reason suddenly returned to me. Marguerite is doubtless only feigning submission to avoid scandal, or perhaps she wishes to try my patience. I sought encouragement in her eyes. She did not observe my glances, or she pretended not to see them. Fanny whispered to me not to give way. She had nothing to fear. Anger had yielded to profound depression. I could not feel hatred even against de Mauvezin. I gave up the contest. I never remember experiencing so profound an indifference to everything—so perfect a contempt for life.

As I left the room to seek my horse, M. Désormes asked me to have his animal harnessed, as it was time to start. The sky was clearing. A few stars peeped from between the rifts in the heavy, black clouds that still scudded before the wind. I led my cousin's horse to her, determined that she should speak one word decisive of my fate. While I placed her in the saddle, she whispered that the marquis insisted upon accompanying her to the chateau, but to keep at her side, as she wished to speak to me. As Marguerite yet commended me, I felt that all was not lost. I had misunderstood her. She was merely deferring the last blow, which she had promised to give when pushed to extremities.

Mlle. d'Astafort, Marguerite, Mauvezin, de Vincieux, Boc, la Chapelaud, and I silently accompanied the carriage, which moved slowly over the muddy road. We had still some distance to go. De Mau-

vezin was riding on one side of Marguerite, and I on the other. He hummed a hunting tune, and seemed determined not to leave us.

"Are you going to sing all the way to St. Jean?" asked Marguerite, jeeringly. "It is pretty, but tiresome."

The marquis was silent. A warm gust of wind rustled the foliage. The skies again became obscure.

"We shall have more of the storm," said de Vincieux. "We had better hurry, or we shall be more wetted than we were before."

A second and stronger gust of wind bowed the oak-trees, and a clap of thunder was heard. The storm approached rapidly; the wind blew along the road we were following towards Blendez. The carriage moved quickly, and we followed at a rapid trot.

"Why should we hurry ourselves?" said Marguerite, checking her horse. "We shall not be more nor less wet, and I love to breathe the strong wind of a storm. Stop, Mark! Listen! Do you not hear that roaring sound, like the voice of the sea? It is the wail of the spirits of the night, is it not? They fly before the storm, destroying in their desperate course the boughs and small forest trees."

"Mlle. Désormes is a poetess," said de Mauvezin. "I never heard such pretty things said about a gust of wind before."

He had a mocking tone. Marguerite pretended not to hear him, and addressed herself markedly to me.

"It is the great ghost, with her black dogs, who is angry with us for hunting in her grounds, and who will presently carry us off in a tornado of hail and lightning."

Marguerite was interrupted by a dreadful clap of

thunder. We were enveloped in a blaze of fire. I saw a large tree struck by lightning fall crashing before us. My horse took fright, shied, and almost threw me. This brilliant light was followed by profound darkness. I heard Marguerite call me. De Vinceaux asked if any one was hurt, and the horses started at full gallop. I shouted to know where I might join them. No one answered me. Another flash showed me that I was alone; but within ten feet of me was Marguerite, mounted on my white horse. I joined her hastily. I spoke to her. I could not hear her answer. She extended her arm towards the bridle of my horse, to indicate to me that we should seek the road, and started off like an arrow. I understood that she wished to keep her promise to me, and compromise herself so that the marquis might refuse her hand.

For a quarter of an hour we rode wildly under a blinding rain. Directing our course by the flashes of lightning, which confused our horses, already terrified by the incessant rolling of the thunder, we passed through a deep and rapid stream, and crossed two hills, when our horses, overcome by fatigue, stopped to breathe themselves. The tornado had diminished in violence. I sought to discover where we were in this forest, in which I doubt whether in broad daylight I could have found my road. We were lost, and I told my companion so.

"Yes!" she replied, "we have wandered away."

At the sound of that voice I was struck dumb. It was not Marguerite.

"Fanny!" I cried. "How! it is you? But Marguerite, where is she?"

"Who knows? She is doubtless with her affianced.

He is quicker in recognizing horseflesh than you, M. Spahi. He did not mistake my white horse for your iron-gray Arab."

"You mock me, Fanny, you torture me. I knew well that you were wicked."

"Then you hate me, Mark?"

"Have you not deceived me designedly; led me away from Marguerite?"

"If I did it, you ought to thank me for saving you from a quarrel with Mauvezin. He was angry this evening, and had resolved to push matters to extremes."

"What do you say? Speak, I insist."

"I wish to tell you that Marguerite acted like a mad creature, like a fool; in braving to his face a man of little intelligence, and, I will admit, of great vanity, but filled with audacity and obstinacy. He has a brutal pride with which she did wrong to trifle. Ah! Marguerite imagined that M. Adalbert would take her teasings and impertinences for aversion. Poor child! she knows little of the world. M. de Mauvezin only saw in them advances and endearments."

"The fool!" I cried.

"Fool or not, he believes himself loved, and it will be best to leave him in the belief, my poor Mark, for, beware of his vengeance the day his self-love is wounded!"

Fanny's words irritated me to such a degree that, had Mauvezin been present, I should have crushed him. I felt that this cruel or perfidious girl would drive me mad.

"Let us go," I said, spurring my horse, who reared violently.

"Go whither?" replied she; "in which direction?"

I gave the rein to my horse; he instantly turned around and started off. He knew the road, and would carry me home. Fanny tried to persuade me that we were going wrong, but I would not listen to her. To avoid being left, she was obliged to follow; and in about one hour we reached St. Jean.

It was two in the morning. Kadour told me, on taking my horse, that the rest had arrived some time before and had waited for us; but that now all had retired except Mme. d'Astafort, who was uneasy about her daughter.

She was waiting for us at the door of the saloon, and reproached Fanny bitterly for having wandered in the woods all night with a gentleman.

"But, mother, the storm scattered us all, and we were lost."

"You cannot make me believe that you could have been lost for so long a time—you who know the country so well—therefore do not lie to me."

I swore to Mme. d'Astafort that her daughter told the truth.

"Bah, bah! I am not your dupe," she replied. "I know that you two understand one another very well. I permitted you to pay attention to my daughter; but there are certain forms that must be complied with, M. Mark. Do you think that it is pleasant for a mother to see every one laughing at her to her face, for her uneasiness about her daughter. You have compromised her. Happily, I know that you are too honorable a man not to make reparation for your fault."

"What do you call a fault, madam?" I asked quickly, angry at her stupid suspicions. "Know that I respect Mlle. Fanny as my sister, and that never in

my life have I dreamed of seeking a *tête-à-tête* with her, never having had any intention of asking for her hand."

"What! did you not return from Africa with that intention?"

I entreated Mme. d'Astafort to put off till morning explanations in which there was nothing hurtful to her daughter, but which belonged only to her to give. I wished to rest, but, unable to sleep, I have noted the events of the day. I do not believe in Fanny's insinuations, and yet she has wounded me deeply. I cannot overcome my agitation. One stupid idea has possessed me—that Marguerite has perhaps been alone with Mauvezin. It is time for this night to end.

MARK VALERY'S JOURNAL.

September 27th. Kadour informed me that M. Désormes left here in his carriage at six this morning, taking only Dolin with him, and informing no one of his destination. He wore his black hat, as if intending to visit. He is going, without doubt, to Lignières, summoned thither by M. Lormond, who will inform him of the discovery of the will.

I found Mme. d'Astafort in the parlor. I wished to speak to her as a friend, in relation to her marriage projects, and to dispel all allusions on the subject; but as soon as she saw me she said, extending her hand to me:—

"I know all. Fanny has told me everything. She does not love you, though her conduct led me to believe to the contrary. I see that I was deceived. You thought right when you supposed I would not wish to marry her against her inclination. You must excuse my anger of yesterday evening. You were

not to blame. I am not like Désormes; I do not wish to exercise compulsion upon my child."

The dear lady liked nothing better than to prattle, and I easily led her to speak of the events of the night before.

"It is not necessary to be a fortune-teller," she continued, "to see that Marguerite cannot endure the marquis. You noticed her malicious little acts at Chizé, and her tone toward the dried-up old marchioness. My faith, if I were in the marquis' place, I should have left Mlle. Désormes and her millions; but he is not proud, or he has so great a need for money that he swallows affronts which are very hard to digest."

"The marquis did not seem very susceptible, as he accompanied my cousin home through that dreadful storm."

"Nevertheless, he understood her. On entering the parlor, we found him alone. He seemed thoughtful, and in about ten minutes, seeing neither Fanny nor you, he remarked meaningly on the long time it took you to reach home. I was already sufficiently annoyed without his suggestions, and if he had not been a marquis, I should have called him a fool. As the weather was still inclement, Désormes invited him to stay. He refused briefly, and slipped off without a word of adieu to any one. This may be English politeness, but it is great rudeness everywhere else. Désormes seemed quite annoyed. He wished Margot, who had hastened off to change her wet clothes, to hurry back to bid good-night to her lover; but the lover looked as if he had no longer claims upon any one, or anything, and went off with an insolent air. Marguerite did not return to the parlor, so I had no

chance of learning what occurred between the two, on their ride back from Chizé."

"I will tell you," replied my cousin, who had entered without my hearing her. Kissing Mme. d'Astafort, and shaking hands with me, she continued:—

"After that dreadful clap of thunder which dispersed us all, the marquis shouted, 'Let us follow them, they are ahead.' I believed him, and followed; but after a rapid gallop through a heavy rain, I discovered by the flashing of the lightning that we were alone. I saw neither my father's carriage nor the other huntsmen. The marquis said that we were in the forest of Jacqueline; it was the road, for I recognized it. He proposed that I should stop at the keeper's house, the storm at the moment having redoubled its fury, to wait till it should pass. This did not suit me by any means. I refused; he was headstrong, and sprang to the ground. I felt him in the darkness seize my foot and draw me towards him, although he risked making me fall, in order to compel me to dismount. Anger seized me; I struck sharply at him with my whip. I must have hit him, as he released my foot with an oath. Then he seized the bridle, to prevent my riding off. The Arab, unaccustomed to such roughness, reared and jerked himself free. I profited by this to start off at full gallop; but the marquis was after me in a moment. I heard him galloping behind me, crying that I would fall. Happily, I was firm in my seat, and if his English horse can make a longer stride, he is not as easily managed as your brave Medjor. Twice M. de Mauvezin passed me, without being able to bar the way, and I arrived at St. Jean four or five minutes before he did. I went to my room, and would not return again to him.

Moreover, I was so overcome with fatigue and emotion, that I was afraid of being ill. Nanniche made me lie down and take some tea."

"I will make M. de Mauvezin repent of his ride," I replied, beside myself.

"I forbid *thee*," replied Marguerite; "remember thyself."

"How!" cried Mme. d'Astafort, astonished. "Marguerite and you *thou* and *thee* each other, M. Mark?"

"Sometimes, dear madam!" answered Marguerite. "It is a habit of my childhood, of which I cannot break myself."

I felt inclined to fall at her feet, and entreat pardon for the mad thoughts that had filled me since the night before.

"Then," replied Mme. d'Astafort, "you are in a scrape with the marquis. I thought so; and your father? He will not listen to it. Your marriage is fixed for the 15th of October, and invitations are issued for a ball on the 4th, to celebrate your betrothal."

"We will defer it, and recall the invitations," replied Marguerite, calmly, "unless," she added with a gentle smile, indicating me to Mme. d'Astafort, "my father will consent to my marrying him that I love."

Seizing the hands of my beloved, I covered them with kisses.

"Ah, heavens!" exclaimed Mme. d'Astafort, getting up and sitting down mechanically, like an automaton, "you love each other. In spite of myself, I have from time to time suspected it."

"Fanny never told you, then?"

"My faith, no! My daughter was in your confidence. I understand all now."

"You have our secret, dear madam," said Marguerite, embracing her; "keep it, unless you think it most advisable to inform my father."

"Your father will never consent. I dare not tell him. If you had consulted me—but just think—"

"I have thought enough, and I have suffered enough," replied Marguerite. "I have offered a passive resistance to my father; he has mistaken it for weakness. I wished the refusal to come from de Mauvezin; that is why I hesitated and feigned to think over his mother's proposal yesterday evening. Dear Mark! I saw how you suffered; I was overcome, but happy to see that you kept your promise. It was because you did not doubt me, was it not? There was a moment when I had nearly ruined everything, and you had the resolution not to meddle in it. I did not want a duel with Mauvezin. I am now certain that he will refuse me of his own accord. Providence came to my aid, and gave me the opportunity of proving my true feelings to the gentleman, and even of imprinting them upon his cheek with my whip."

Dear Marguerite! how ashamed I now feel of my doubts! M. Désormes did not return home till near ten at night. He was in a very bad humor, but that did not prevent him from taking his supper on arriving. Afterwards he came into the parlor, and strode up and down with long steps, his hands behind his back, his head bent, and chewing his cigar. Marguerite asked him several times what had disturbed him, but he would give no answer.

"Uncle," I said, "what is on your mind? You have been to Lignières and seen M. Lormond."

"And if I have been to Lignières, that is my business," he replied, rudely; "I know what I am about."

"You are very angry then?" remarked Mme. d'Astafort. "Tell us what disturbs you; you know that we are all interested. Is it all about de Mauvezin?"

"About the marquis indeed! It is much more serious than that. It is about my fortune. Here am I obliged to repay twelve hundred thousand francs to monsieur my nephew, and eight hundred thousand to mademoiselle my daughter. After which, I may do what I can with what remains."

Without attending to Mme. d'Astafort's amazement, he continued:—

"Watch carefully over your property, or some fine morning you will be politely informed: 'It is not yours, my good man; give up everything.' And you," he continued, turning to me, "you did well in returning from Africa, to put me into such a predicament. You are richer than I am. Ah! I ought to have expected something, and to have suspected that old Valery, living or dead, would have played me some such trick. The vindictive old fellow never forgave me the games of picquet I won from him. It shows his ingratitude; I only played to amuse him. God knows that he was not amiable all that time. And that mad Rosalie Boc, to leave such papers around, in place of throwing them into the fire! My God, how little sense people have! It is all very fine, the children, the grandparents, the wills! What ass invented wills?"

I let this first outburst pass. I saw in this loss of a part of his fortune a just punishment of his cupidity, and yet I pitied him, as one would pity a child that cannot be made to listen to reason. When I thought him calmer, I asked if M. Lormond had not spoken to him of certain projects of marriage.

"Oh, yes," he replied, laughing, "you are rich now, and return to your former ideas. But it is not to be thought of. I have given my word, and only last night I renewed it. All the fortune remaining to me will only make up the dower which I have promised to give with Marguerite. However, it is all one, I can work. I can save, and can follow the plow, if necessary; but I shall have the pleasure of saying: 'My daughter the marchioness, my grandson the count.'"

"No, never!" replied Marguerite.

"Never! what do you mean?" cried M. Désormes, furiously. "You dare to resist my wishes, to have any other will than mine?"

"Yes, father, I also have a will."

"This is too much," he cried, crossing his arms and looking fixedly at his daughter, without, however, intimidating her. After an instant's silence, he continued: "And what is your will?"

"My will is to marry Mark," was the answer. "

My uncle made no reply, but, clenching his fists, he walked away from his daughter, made the tour of the room, encountering Mme. d'Astafort's embroidering-frame, which he kicked from one end of the apartment to the other, and then threw himself into an arm-chair. Marguerite came and took my hand, and led me forward, and we kneeled at his feet.

"My will is to marry Mark," she repeated, firmly. "It was my mother's wish, and once yours. You must remember it; be just, be good, my father!"

"But the marquis, and my promise?"

"Your promise is not binding on Marguerite," I said. "Moreover, the marquis is ruined. You are as rich to-day as yesterday. In taking me for a son-in-law, do you not assure to Marguerite the fortune

you expected to leave her? You are the master and administrator of considerable property; you will always remain so. In what better, more prudent, more active hands could I place my interests? You know that I understand nothing of business; you have often reproached me with my ignorance. Be happy! since I have no intention of understanding these things. I will always leave them to you." My last argument appeared to strike him.

"Come, Désormes," said Mme. d'Astafort, drying her eyes, "marry these children. You see that they have always loved and will always love one another."

"How! you also?" he replied. "Well, I will not allow myself to be softened by prayers and tears, any more than moved by threats. Once for all, no!"

Marguerite arose pale, and said in a firm tone:—

"'Tis well; I shall await my majority."

M. Désormes shrugged his shoulders and left the room.

Mme. d'Astafort hastened after him, to induce him to change his determination. Fanny had remained mute and impassive during this scene. She now left the room, saying to Marguerite:—

"You to-day realize what I have always predicted—your father will never yield."

Marguerite and I gazed at each other without speaking. She looked as if about to weep. Taking her hand, I commenced to thank her for her courage and firmness; but, with the grace which she alone possesses, she turned to me her pale cheek, over which coursed a great tear, and said:—

"We will wait. I will never marry any but you. Kiss your wife."

28th September. Emotions so profound have re-

called me to the affairs of actual life, that I believed myself delivered from my hallucinations—that is to say, the disgusting and mysterious remembrances of my past existence—though I am more than ever led to believe in them.

Again, during the night, I heard myself called in my sleep. I awoke, and heard near me a repressed breathing. "Who is there?" I asked. A cold, soft hand pressed my forehead.

"It is I," said some one. "I am here! Listen to me!"

A woman's soft arms were wound around my neck. I was about to call out.

"Hush!" said the being by my side, covering my mouth with her slender fingers. She breathed into my ear, but I did not hear the sound of her voice.

"Am I not your wife—the one who loves you, and whom you yet love? You swore to me an eternal love; your oath is inscribed upon bronze. You believe me dead; but I returned to life, on seeing you—on feeling that you love me ever, despite time, distance, death. Place your hand upon my heart, and see how it beats for you. You now remember everything, since you recounted, so truly, our history. Is it possible that, after this, you could act as if you would again forget it? Do you believe that I have been unfaithful to you? Listen, how I avenged you. After your death, Dhu-Lug fled, as if in despair, saying that he had missed you in the woods, and, attracted by your cries, had hastened to your aid too late to save you. So sincere did his repentance seem, so real his grief, that none thought of suspecting him. Even I believed your death an accident. I mourned alone and in silence. I caused to be constructed the

hypogeum and monument where you found me, and thither I brought your body, which I interred in a rich sarcophagus. Daily, according to our funeral rites, I went to weep in the mortuary chamber. Your dog accompanied me, waiting at the door, and returning home with me. I recognized him—the poor Dhu—the day when, mistaking me for a statue, you bore me back to the light of the sun. Dhu-Lug scarcely ever quitted me, and seemed to share my grief. He found how easily he could deceive me by speaking of his friendship and devotion to you. At last he became emboldened, and told me that he loved me, and that I ought to think of marrying again. Dhu-Lug was a handsome and valiant warrior, and had gained the friendship of my father, who also entreated me not to remain a widow. But after loving you, I could not love again, and if my thoughts were ever tempted to wander towards Dhu-Lug, my oath, graven in letters of fire, always appeared before me. Your dog displayed towards Dhu-Lug a hatred which first awakened my suspicions in relation to what had occurred in the forest. I conjured the gods Cabires to enlighten me. The following night they revealed to me the truth, as it sometimes pleases them to do by giving speech to animals. Your dog approached my solitary bed, and said:—

“‘Remember your oaths—not only to love our master, but to avenge him; Dhu-Lug is his assassin.’

“I employed deceit with my persecutor. One day, when warmly entreated by him to consent to his happiness, I said:—

“‘Know that I am an enchantress; that I can call up the dead and extort from them the secrets of the

grave, and that I can also compel the living to obey my wishes.' He paled and trembled. I continued:—

"‘It was I that forced you to kill Wald-Righ; it was I who obliged you to divorce your wife. I only gave the preference to Wald-Righ because he was the *brenn*. Despite his death, I wish again to be the queen of the country. Now, do you not see that I have always loved you?’

"Dhu-Lug was bewildered, and avowed all. The wretch believed me capable of every baseness, and, consequently, worthy of him. He entreated me to yield to his passion.

"‘No, no!’ I replied; ‘we might be discovered, and my time of mourning having not yet expired, I should be blamed. Come to-night, when my servitors are buried in sleep; I await the moment as impatiently as you.’

"I prepared a delicate supper; Dhu-Lug was prompt to the appointment. Whilst reciting the details of your death, which I begged him to recount, I administered a sleeping potion to him—the murderer of all my happiness was in my power. I hesitated between the desire of killing him and that of making his life a living death. Choosing the latter, I drew from my hair a long pin, sharp-pointed as a dagger, and thrust it into his eyes. Look! this is the pin. The pain aroused him; he awoke from his lethargy, plunged into everlasting darkness.

"‘Murderer of Wald-Righ!’ I said, ‘learn that I only brought you hither to revenge myself—begone!’

"Dhu-Lug vowed my death; he said everywhere that I was a witch, and that by my wicked practices I had evoked a maleficent demon, who, under the form of a wild boar, had killed you in the forest. He pretended

that I had put out his eyes because he had refused to marry me. He induced his former wife, whom he had again married, and Karnach, my slave, who hated me because I had caused him to be beaten with rods in Etruria for daring to say that he was in love with me, to sustain his calumnies. Since then Karnach had always hated me, and his slanderous testimony, combined with Dhu-Lug's accusations, obliged me, according to the Gallic custom, to demand a trial, and, if required, even to submit to torture. The Vergobreiths and Druids assembled in council, and I appeared before them. I told them my whole story; I avowed the vengeance I had taken on Dhu-Lug; but he did not appear. Karnach came, and said that he had found him strangled by the dog Dhu on the summit of the tumulus, and that, for his part, he withdrew every accusation against me. He even asked to be readmitted into my service, and to have charge of the dog, the marks of whose teeth he showed in his throat, saying:—

“‘He has made me understand that I was wrong, and that I ought to ask pardon of my former masters.’

“My Etruscans saw in Dhu-Lug's death a just punishment of the gods, and their desire to protect me. The Vergobreiths acquitted me; but from that hour I found that I inspired so great a terror throughout the country that all abandoned me. I was inconsolable for your death. I only endured life for the sake of my father. At last, he died. Left without a tie in this world, I resolved to die also. I hastened to rejoin you; my oath called me. With the images of my gods and my most precious relics, I locked myself into your sepulchral chamber, causing Karnach

to build up the wall behind me, after recommending Dhu, who constantly wandered round your tomb, to his care. When alone, I drank a mysterious beverage which, while producing death, preserves the body from destruction; and this statue, which you admire, is myself."

"Marguerite," I cried—for it could only be she who, whispering and changing her pronunciation, was playing a trick upon me—"cease this game, it will drive me mad. You know that I love you; do not seek to prove me by continuing the story which I told you."

"I am the dark Callirhoé, and not Margareth, the fair virgin of the oaks; she steals all my happiness, the Druidess! You have no right to love her and to make her your wife; you are married to me—the tie is eternal. Remember! Twice have I approached you, twice have you repulsed me. Beware! The seven Cabires, witnesses of our oaths, will punish their violation. Markek, love me again! You only can recall me to existence. Save me from oblivion—from the annihilation which I fear. Love me! Pity me!"

I could not resist these passionate entreaties. I drew the yielding form towards me; I felt it tremble. Suddenly the idea returned to my mind that this was not Marguerite, and I cried:—

"Be you who you may, begone! Woman or statue, temptation or dream, begone!"

"Ah! you take me for a statue!" she cried, raising her voice.

It was one unknown to me, and, with a burst of frightful laughter, continued:—

"You love the fair Druidess. Yes, I remember.

She told you that she would be your wife in another existence. That existence has then arrived. Her pure love is more powerful than my passion. Misery! misery! misery!"

Her voice faded away. I was bathed in a cold sweat. I trembled like a child, and when she had left me, I breathed as if an enormous weight had been lifted from my breast. I distinctly heard the floor creaking under a woman's step. The heavy curtains of my bed shook. Then all became so profoundly silent that I could hear the beating of my own heart.

I sprang up, and ran to open the door leading from my room into the library. It was ajar. I remember distinctly having shut it carefully on retiring.

The faint dawn of morning illuminated the room with doubtful light, and I was struck dumb with astonishment at not seeing the statue in its usual place. Was this an hallucination, an optical delusion? I believed so. I closed my eyes to collect my wandering thoughts. "Come!" I said to myself, "it is impossible that *she* is not here. I sleep yet, and I still dream."

I opened my eyes, certain that I had been deceived. I jerked open the curtains. A ray of rosy light penetrated the room, playing over the books and the curiosities in the library, over the velvet pedestal which still bore the print of my nymph's beautiful feet. All that she had said to me was yet confused, but by degrees it came back clearly to my mind, as if I still heard it, and I regretted the harsh words with which I had answered her. Then, on thinking that I should never again see her, I was seized with so profound a despair that I melted into tears, and, throwing myself

upon the pedestal, kissed the spot which had been pressed by her delicate feet.

A step which I heard in the hall beyond my chamber recalled me to myself. I do not know what mad idea possessed me. I thought they were coming to carry off Callirhoé, and that I might be able to seize the ravisher. I flew to open my door. I saw Dolin carelessly sweeping the stairs. I asked him passionately where the statue was. The poor fellow stared at me in terror.

"You are mocking me. Of course it is in the library."

"No! Speak! What have you done with it? Where have you put it?"

"But why will you have it that I have put it somewhere? There is no danger that I would ever approach it. Besides, a stone statue of that weight is not easily carried off. I see, monsieur, you are jesting with me."

"I do not jest, fool! This is more important than you think."

"The deuce! If it is as you say, she must be out walking," said he, laughing foolishly, and casting a half-fearful, half-amused look upon me, which made me understand that I was verging on the ridiculous, and that he was laughing at me.

I slammed the door in his face. I did not dare to return to the library to reassure myself, but threw myself upon my bed. I was really ashamed. In turning on my bed, I felt something pricking my shoulder like the blade of a poniard. I raised my hand, and found a long golden pin, like those worn in their hair by the ladies of olden times. It was the pin which Callirhoé had shown me, the pin with which

she said that she had avenged herself. I had not dreamed! Here was the proof! But then I was the sport of, I could not tell what, strange fatality. Must I, then, believe in the gods Cabires, in the power of oaths beyond the tomb, in the existence of Callirhoé? No, it is impossible! All is a pleasantry of Marguerite's. She wishes to prove me, perhaps. But Marguerite would not visit me thus at night; it does not please her to give me pain. But Fanny! Fanny is so strange! Does she wish to render me faithless to Marguerite, or to revenge herself on Mauvezin? No! I could not believe in such wickedness. Where had she learned this tale? In Apuleius, perhaps. Yes, I remember to have read it. It is a literary reminiscence, nothing more. I have dreamed. Fanny is not a depraved creature; and if the statue is not in the library, some one has stolen it, that is all.

I did not dare to go again to assure myself. Fear of one's self is a dreadful fear. I was walking in the garden when I met Marguerite. Surprised at my preoccupation, she asked me where I had found the beautiful antique pin, which I still held in my hand. She took it, to admire the carving of the little figure at the top.

"Marguerite," I said, watching her, "you do not, then, recognize this pin?"

"No; it is not a part of our collection. But, Mark, look, there is blood on the point."

"Blood! Ah, yes, it is—it is mine," I replied.

I told her that I had wounded myself in picking it up. I dared not tell her of my dream, nor of Callirhoé's disappearance.

"Speak, Mark! You hide something from me.

You are pale; you suffer. What is the matter? what does this pin mean?"

"Nothing, nothing! A jest! Where is Callirhoé?"

"The statue? Why do you ask me?"

"Because it is no longer in the library."

Marguerite looked at me in terror. I took it for an avowal, and said, sadly:—

"Why did you do it?"

"Mark, I do not understand. You are strange to-day. Do you know, if I had not confidence, seeing you thus sad, almost wandering, I should imagine that you were in love with the statue, and that Fanny was right in saying that, in my place, she would be jealous of this pretended love of the past, which you are too fond of looking back to. Come, let us forget this beauty with the blue enamel eyes. Look at mine, which have life, and can express how much they love you."

I looked at her searchingly, wishing to read to the bottom of her heart. Was she really jealous of the statue, and had she had it removed? She turned her look from me, saying that my eyes pained her. I took this confusion for a confession, and felt almost angry. I was even about to reproach her, when I saw Kadour, who was discreet enough not to approach us, but who made me signs aside. Nanniche at the moment came to her mistress for some directions in relation to household matters, and when I was alone, Kadour approached me, and said:—

"Sidi, me been very frightened. Stone woman not in book room. She lying near your bed, and she no wish go back to her place. Too heavy, and Dolin too much coward. If you carry her there, you strong like two; but if you put her there—"

"Do you also believe that she can walk?"

"Allah great! Nothing impossible to Allah!" replied he, looking up at the heavens with an inspired air.

The statue was, in fact, behind the heavy curtains of my bed; but how did it get there? Never mind! it was found; and I was so pleased, that I ran to embrace it; but the presence of Kadour, who remained immovable, watching me, checked my ardor. I called him to aid me in replacing it in the library.

"Ah, Sidi! you no able carry her all alone. You not bring her here?"

In fact, how could I alone have had the strength to carry this marble, almost beyond the strength of two? In replacing it on the pedestal, I thought that its arms yielded to compression, and I believed that I saw its cheeks color. I would not give way to this new fantasy, and, to assure myself that I was again dreaming, I asked Kadour the color of the statue's cheeks.

"Rosy, like Nanniche," he replied, naively.

I was, then, not dreaming, or Kadour was dreaming likewise. I hastily left the room, to escape the crowd of ideas, more or less impossible, which threatened to overthrow my reason, and seemed to reverse the order of things established by nature.

Mark Valery to Cadanet:—

September 29, 1852.

MY DEAR FRIEND: I am very, very happy! I am to marry Marguerite, my dear Marguerite. My uncle has at last consented. I must also tell you that I am rich, very rich! A legacy has fallen to me from heaven; but I shall do better to send you my journal, which will place before you the rapid events of the

last few days, events which you must first read, and of which this letter will tell you the sequel.

Yesterday, during the day, my uncle formally gave me his daughter's hand. He walked all the morning around the house, sad and downhearted. He did not breakfast with us, but continued to cherish resentment towards all the world, and especially towards me. Seeing him at the end of the garden, I tried to join him, with the idea of persuading him to listen to reason; but he turned his back when he saw me in the distance, and went off into the fields. I was very anxious to awaken kindlier feelings in him, for, though determined not to abandon my intention to marry Marguerite, I felt that it would be necessary again to leave his house.

In the parlor I found the priest whom I had met at Chizé. He was holding a long conference with Mme. d'Astafort. What is he doing in a heretic's house? Does he wish to confess Mme. d'Astafort, who is neither cunning nor guileful? Was he sent as spy by the marchioness? As soon as he saw me, he stepped forward and wrung my hand with paternal familiarity, felicitating me on my new and brilliant fortune. Whence could he have learned anything of my affairs? Hearing the rattle of carriage-wheels, he ran to the window, and exclaimed, "It is M. de la Chapelaud," in the tone of a man who sees arriving some one whom he expects. M. la Chapelaud entered with an important air, and asked to speak with M. Désormes. Marguerite told him that her father was attending to his business, but that she had sent to summon him. The priest cast a glance of intelligence at M. la Chapelaud, and saying that he knew very well where to find M. Désormes, he went out with a mysterious air.

Fanny, followed by Boc, entered a moment afterwards.

"This devil of a Désormes," said la Chapelaud, familiarly, "is slow, and I am in a hurry."

"Is it anything that I can tell him?" asked Marguerite.

"No, mademoiselle, thank you! It is a letter for him. I come here on the part of M. Adalbert Duluc, Marquis de Mauvezin."

He pronounced these titles with such emphasis, that I thought I had misunderstood him, and made him repeat them.

"Duluc?" I cried, looking at Marguerite. "Yes, Duluc."

"Duluc!" she replied, struck, as I had been, with the resemblance of this name with that of Dhu-Lug in Callirhoé's story.

"Well, yes! Duluc de Mauvezin!" replied Chapelaud. "What is there so surprising in that?"

"This is, then, a new title, acquired since the old marquis' death?" asked Mme. d'Astafort.

"Excuse me, madam; Duluc is his real name. His grandfather took that of Mauvezin by marriage. His ancestors erected a fief of that name into a marquisate; you were aware of it."

"Let me think," said Boc, in peremptory tones. "There was never a marquisate in the Duluc family, and the de Mauvezins have been long extinct. The Dulucs are gentlemen, very possibly, but less noble than the Chapelauds."

"Who doubted it?" said the little man, bridleing up. "We date since 1103; but that does not prevent Adalbert—"

"From being neither a marquis nor a Mauvezin," replied Marguerite, laughing.

"I thought, nevertheless," said Fanny, looking at me, "that M. Duluc's ancestors dated back upwards of two thousand three hundred years. Is it not so, Mark?"

"You are right," I replied, with a distraught air.

I was perplexed and preoccupied with this message of the marquis. Then this name "Duluc," or "Dhulug," of which I had only heard in dreams, and yet which was no mystery for the rest, recalled to me the painful and sorrowful emotions of the past night. At length my uncle entered with the priest. He excused himself for having kept waiting a gentleman of so ancient a family as la Chapelaud. The latter handed him his missive. In place of opening it, my uncle, who was just in a mood to speak bluntly, turned to the priest, saying:—

"We shall soon see, Monsieur l'Abbé, whether this is an underhand affair, arranged by you through your hatred of Protestants, or the resolve of the young man. The devil! he is no fool; he is like me—he thinks nothing of religion; and it is somewhat late to speak of scruples, when you knew very well that, like my deceased wife, my daughter belongs to the reformed church."

"I told you the truth, M. Désormes," said the priest, softly. "We hoped that Mlle. Désormes would be converted; but she declared the contrary so decidedly—"

"My daughter has nothing to say in it; she will profess the religion which I command her to profess."

"My dear Désormes, you are unreasonable," replied la Chapelaud; "consciences are not to be forced."

Mme. de Mauvezin is an austere person, and would not accept a pretended conversion. Read her letter."

My uncle read it aloud:—

"My dear M. Désormes: There are certain painful and delicate explanations which I would like to avoid. The Abbé Geraud and M. de la Chapelaud will tell you the reasons which oblige my son and myself to withdraw the request we have had the pleasure of making, while ignorant of the obstacles which existed. Believe in my regrets and in my desire to maintain my former friendly relations with you."

"You see," said the priest, "that we are here as simple ambassadors."

"Yes, yes!" added la Chapelaud, "the commission was not agreeable, but it had to be accepted."

Marguerite, mortified by the sort of opposition which her father made, was anxious to say that, for her part, there could have been no better news; but M. Désormes did not give her the time.

"Good! this only was needed," he cried, crushing the letter spitefully. "It must be, zounds! one catastrophe brings another! But the marquis?"

"The marquis has no will but his mother's," replied the priest. "It is clearly expressed in the letter."

"Well, tell your marquis and marchioness that I clearly see the difficulty; they were casting loving looks at my crowns, and now that they know—"

I ran to my uncle to try and stop him.

"Ah! leave me alone; all this is your fault; I wish to speak before all the world. You may repeat my words to this spark, and tell him that I should have honored him by accepting him for a son-in-law; and as it is only now that he remembers that we are peasants, that the peasants regard him with contempt;

and that there may be no chance for him to change his mind, you will tell him that my daughter marries her cousin, Mark Valery. I shall publish the bans next Sunday. That is my answer."

"Bravo!" cried Boc; "that is right."

My uncle went out, boiling with anger. I followed, in order to thank and calm him, but he repulsed me roughly.

"That is enough! I have no need either of consolation or of thanks. I do not hide it from you that I have not sacrificed myself willingly. You are satisfied—I am not. You love each other—so much the better for you; marry, and leave me in peace."

He was so unmanageable that I was greatly inclined to leave him; but I felt that, in spite of him, in spite of myself, perhaps—like the simpleton I am—I loved him. I displayed so much affection towards him that at last he became mollified. I sent Marguerite to console him, and an hour afterwards they returned to the parlor, where they found Mme. d'Astafort, her daughter, the noble Boc—as pleased as if all my happiness had fallen to his lot—the doctor, and Raoul.

La Chapelaud and the priest had gone. M. Chaspain and Lormond, laden with bundles of papers and a big portfolio, had arrived. They did not expect to find business in such good time.

Marguerite was radiant; she seemed to be surrounded with a halo of happiness. She held her smiling father by the hand.

"Yes, yes!" he said, "cajole me, flatter me; you wish to make me forgive your hard-headedness and your disobedience. I was blind not to see that you were fooling me. I owe you something for that; but, indeed, I do not wish you to be unhappy. Moreover,

Mark is generous-hearted, he is rich and knighted; he is a man now. But he lacked frankness towards me."

When I tried to answer, he said:—

"That is enough on the subject, my son-in-law. Embrace your bride, and make her happy."

Marguerite threw her arms around my neck, giving me a good kiss on my forehead before everybody. I could not say one word; my knees bent; I sank into an arm-chair, melted to tears.

"Come, come!" said my uncle, shaking me, "do not get sick. What an effect all this has upon you! Come, no weakness!"

"Excuse me, uncle, I am so happy!"

Throwing myself upon my knees before Marguerite, I exclaimed:—

"As you see her, she has been the dream of my life, the whole aim of my existence."

"Poor boy! he touches one's heart," said Mme. d'Astafort, who was weeping. "I should have been so happy if it had been my Fanny that— But we must think no more of it."

She approached me, this big, good woman—for in reality she is good—and asked me to kiss her, which I did with hearty good-will. Then, throwing myself into my uncle's arms, I said:—

"I will make your daughter happy, and you will also be happy, I swear it, if you will let us love you."

"Oh, heavens! from the time you become my son-in-law," said he, "you will have my fortune. A little sooner, or a little later, it makes little difference."

"It only changes owners," said M. Lormond, laughing.

"When is the marriage-day?" asked Fanny, who had stood by the chimney, cold and impassive.

"Why," replied my uncle, "we have chosen the 15th of next month. Why change the day?"

Raoul, the doctor, and the notaries shook hands with me. Boc asked permission to embrace me.

"With all my heart," I answered. "I shall never forget that to you I owe my happiness."

"Oh, I am very happy myself," replied he, "the more so as I have found my ballad, 'To Night.' It is beautiful. I will read it to you, and you shall see."

We sat down at table. The dinner was very lively. In the evening my uncle wished to speak to me in private. We went to his room, and there he made up entirely for the ill-will and selfish feelings which until this day he had displayed towards me.

"Boy," he said, speaking as in the halcyon days of my childhood, "there is one thing weighing upon me, one thing which I might keep to myself; but, though I love money, I am an honest man. I need not render account to any one of the revenues with which I improved your property, and added a little to mine."

"Do not speak of it, uncle," I said, taking his hand, "since we are friends."

"That is well. But when old Valery died, believing myself heir, I went to Lignières and brought away much of the furniture. It is still here. I am ready to return it to you."

"It is well where it is."

"Good! But you must also know that I found a large sum of money, never mentioned in the will. I took it, believing it mine; but as everything is yours, so is the money."

"Let us not bother about it, uncle."

"No, it is yours. I have placed it at large interest, and to-day it amounts to nearly two hundred thousand francs."

"Make it a present to Marguerite, as her dower."

"A dower of two hundred thousand francs to the daughter of a millionaire? You jest. The whole province would laugh at me."

"Then keep it."

"Once again, no! I will make a clean breast of it. I am avaricious, yet generous; undecided, yet resolute. Since all these money losses have fallen upon me, I have thought a good deal. I do not wish Marguerite to think that her father does not love her. I do not wish to be blamed, to be treated as a miserly old hunk by all the country. I wish the marquis to see that the people know how to do things on a grand scale. I wish that de Mauvezin should burst at once with spite and regret. I shall give as dower to my daughter the chateau and dependencies of St. Jean, all inclosed with walls and ditches. It is worth four hundred thousand francs, besides the two hundred thousand francs which you refuse to take. I will go and live on my farm of Bellevue, next to this. I will have the main building of the small lodge repaired, and live according to my taste, on the seventeen thousand livres of income which remain to me."

"But you will be alone, uncle?"

"Bah! I shall be near you; and when I am tired, I will come and see you."

Upon that, we parted. To-day half the time was employed in business conferences between the notaries, who slept here. I did not wish to hear money mentioned, and I allowed M. Lormond to arrange my present and future interests by contract.

Now, my friend, I ask you, in proof of your friendship, to be present at my nuptials. Arrange your affairs, ask a furlough, and come.

Marguerite, to whom I have often spoken of my dear Cadanet, is very desirous of knowing you. Come, my friend, start. Come and show her your yellow moustache, your handsome scars, and your big hands, and make her appreciate your noble heart. We do not wish to marry unless you are here. You can be here by the 10th or 12th, and you will be, I am very certain. Tell our friends of my happiness. You I embrace with a heart forever yours, and *since ever*; this is my belief.

MARK.

Mark Valery to Cadanet:—

October 5, 1852.

My old comrade, *whatever may happen*, you will receive and read this at St. Jean; for I believe that you are *en route*, and I wish greatly to receive and press you in my arms, unless— A truce to preambles! This is still the journal of your friend, who relates and exposes to you his life day by day, hour by hour, so to say. For three days every one here has been engaged in preparations for the ball planned by M. Désormes the day of the chase, in honor of Marguerite's betrothal.

"I do not want the expense to go for nothing," said my uncle. "It is another engagement, that is all; and, besides, I wish rejoicings in the house, that Duluc may not think that he is regretted."

The *fête* was at its height when, on re-entering the ball-room, after having given some orders at Margue-

rite's request, I saw M. de Mauvezin making his way around by the wall, to bow to Mme. d'Astafort.

"Oh, forsooth!" said she to me, when he had left her. "I was as astonished as you. I did not expect that, indeed! He was the first invited at Chizé, and, at least without prohibiting him from coming, I do not see what was to be done. It would have been better to countermand the ball, but M. Désormes thinks of nothing."

"It is M. Duluc who thinks of nothing," I replied. "I do not know whether he comes here to defy us, by showing that a man of his rank cannot harbor resentment towards small gentry like us; but if this is his intention, he will do well not to manifest it too openly."

I saw him approach Marguerite and invite her to dance. She refused, coldly; he showed no vexation, and addressed himself to another. I watched him closely. Fanny, in passing near me, whispered:—

"I must speak to you; let us go out."

"Not now," I answered. "I do not wish to lose sight of my marquis." When he had danced enough to ease his conscience, he followed the card-players to the library, and Fanny led me into the dining-hall, whence I lost nothing passing in the ball-room. Marguerite was dancing with Boc.

"Mark," said Mlle. d'Astafort, "you must show yourself generous; you must pardon de Mauvezin for his audacity in coming here."

"Ah, I knew well that, despite your ridiculing him, you are interested in him."

"One is never interested in those they despise," she replied, warmly "It is for Marguerite that I implore

you. Think of the scandal of a difficulty between you and him."

"He, for whom she was destined, and whom she refused! Where is the scandal? But, tranquillize yourself, Fanny; I want nothing of the marquis. He has never dared me to my face. Let him behave himself to-day, so as to lead people to believe that he came through folly and not arrogance, and I shall be patient enough to laugh at him."

"Poor Mark!" cried Fanny; "you see nothing, you understand nothing! It is Marguerite's fault; she ought to have confessed her misfortune to you."

"Her misfortune! What misfortune? What would you say?"

"The poor child had not the courage to speak. What would you have? She desired to do it; she told you half the truth in relation to what happened that stormy night, after the hunt."

"Fanny, you love to inflict pain. Strike faster and drink my blood. Mauvezin has boasted—"

"No, he has boasted of nothing; he only *confided*, and I found it out. It is true that Marguerite defended herself bravely; that she believed she struck him with her whip; that she imagined she saw him driven off by her horse; but it was the lodge-keeper, posted there to prevent her flight. After this effort of courage, Marguerite became frightened; they held her horse, she fainted; *some one* carried her into the keeper's house. There was no one inside, the keeper was without; he was holding the horses."

"Enough, Fanny," I cried, "enough! You will say no more, I hope."

"Mark, you must learn all. I told you that Marguerite was foolish. She is the spoiled child, which

believes that everything is permitted to it. She is the rich girl, has been badly brought up, and who expects to rule everybody. She dared Mauvezin, she irritated him. He wished to avenge himself; he is avenged!"

"You lie, Fanny, you lie shamelessly! Who is the man capable of such infamy?"

"Mauvezin did not believe that he was committing so great a crime. He wished, and was about to marry Marguerite; he believed that, after passing one hour in his arms, she could no longer refuse herself to him. He saw her momentary uncertainty at Chizé. You remember it? She explained it as best she could; but she did not know how to behave, for, in place of resigning herself to the only course left after the sad misfortune at the keeper's, she declared to the marquis that she hated him, and would never marry any one but you. He also was very much mortified on his arrival here toward midnight. My mother told you that he was sad. He did not wish to see Marguerite again, and she had already fainted in little Nanniche's arms. The marquis certainly reproaches himself for his conduct—and it is hateful, I admit; but what he has done in coming here this evening is not the act of a faithless man."

"Because—"

"Because he knows that Marguerite loves you, and nevertheless he presents himself before her, resolved, if she wishes it, to repair her wrongs. Think, Mark, there is yet time, and bid Marguerite think. You could not make her confess; she loves you, she will even lie to desperation; but give her to understand that you know all, and that she can belong to no one but him who has outraged her."

I declare, for the glory of love, for the honor of my

conscience, that I did not believe one word of what Fanny had told me. With my arms crossed on my breast, I looked full in her face, and answered her in icy tones:—

“Fanny, even if all this is true, I am not the less resolved to marry Marguerite, and it would not become me to love her less than I do. If she has been the victim of an infamous treachery to which *you* gave countenance, she is yet pure, because she has not ceased to love me. You see plainly that your counsels are useless, and that you would have done better to leave me in ignorance.”

Fanny stifled a cry of agony. I pitilessly turned my back upon her. Had she not tortured me with infernal ingenuity!

I rushed to the library, where the marquis was playing whist with la Chapelaud, Raoul, and the doctor. Boc, seated at the foot of the statue, was silently contemplating it. I stared at Mauvezin for several minutes, with a significance which he seemed not to notice. A hand was laid upon my shoulder; I turned; it was Fanny, pale as the statue. I approached Boc, and begged him to lead her to the dance; she refused.

“You would stay?” I said, in low tones; “well, be it so.”

I went to close the inner door, and returned towards the card-table. This time Mauvezin followed me with his eyes, and, as I placed myself before him, said, in insolent tones:—

“Ah! whom are you looking at?”

“M. Duluc de Mauvezin,” I answered, “is it true that you came here with the intention of again offering your name to Mlle. Désormes?”

"If such was my intention, I have no account to render to any but herself; but I would like to tell you that I shall no longer compete with you. *It is too late*, my dear friend."

I thought that these last words were intended as a confirmation of the calumnies that Fanny had brought to me, and, before he could add one word, I cuffed him so vigorously that he fell back upon his chair. He arose and strove to throw himself on me, but I did not give him the time to touch me; I sent him rolling to the foot of the statue, which trembled on its pedestal. The witnesses of this scene—peaceable people!—wished to arrange it, but there was no way, and I laugh still at poor Boc, who treated it as a misapprehension.

"Enough, gentlemen," I said; "I am at the disposition of the marquis."

"To-morrow morning," he replied; "swords—I want to kill you! M. de la Chapelaud will arrange with your seconds about the ground."

I allowed the marquis to recover himself. As for me, I was already recovered. I had been so long burning to chastise this scoundrel, that I felt consoled. I took Fanny's arm and asked her to dance; she seemed scarcely able to stand, and she tried to refuse; nevertheless, I compelled her to be Marguerite's *vis-à-vis*.

In a quarter of an hour the marquis reappeared, still pale, but self-possessed. There were some suspicions as to what had occurred, and I observed whisperings and glances. I continued to dance with such spirit, that Marguerite suspected nothing. We were interrupted by supper. Fanny disappeared. I saw her enter and wander around for a few minutes, and

then stop and converse near the sideboard with Mauvezin.

Were they plotting against me? It is probable; but suddenly Fanny uttered a cry, and M. de Mauvezin fell into the arms of Dolin, who happened to be near him. His face was livid, his eyes open, glazed, and set like those of a corpse. The doctor hurried to his aid, and he was soon sufficiently recovered to leave. La Chapelaud came and whispered to me from him that it was nothing, and that he would be at the rendezvous fixed by our seconds for the next day—by eleven o'clock in the morning—swords—*le Terrier Noir*—half-way between Chizé and St. Jean.

I am to fight in two hours; you may believe that Marguerite is ignorant of it; if any misfortune happens to me, she will know it soon enough. Kadour will hand you the package containing my last wishes. It seems to me but just to leave my fortune to her who was to be my wife, and this I have done in a will which Kadour carries to M. Lormond. I have left to my spahi ten thousand francs, to recompense the brave fellow for the devotion that he has always shown to his Christian dog of a master. You will tell him to remain honest, or my ghost will come when he sleeps and pull his feet. Nor have I forgotten Boc, Dolin, and Nanniche. My death will, at least, enrich some who are now poor. As to yourself, I have left you, beside my arms, a small fortune, which you must accept from friendship for me. Adieu, my friend! We have already said that several times in Africa, when we did not expect to meet again, and we know that adieus do not kill; if I do not suppress them as weaknesses, it is because they cement affection. I regret life, I admit, on account of Marguerite

and of you ; but we shall meet again, I am convinced ; where, I cannot say. I have, nevertheless, no presentiment of dying to-day.

Bah ! we do not die—we transmigrate, and death is only the passing from one life to another. It seems to me that I have been answered *yes* in low tones, but so clearly that it made me turn around. There was no one in the library, where I am writing to you ; at least, if it is not the statue that speaks, which is not probable. I have no mind for superstitions just now ; I feel calm and full of faith.

Adieu, and in *every way* farewell till we meet.

Your friend for all time,

MARK.

Mark to Marguerite :—

October 5, 1852.

When you receive this letter, I shall be no more. I need not tell you that my regret is that for a time I shall be separated from you ; but we shall find each other again, as we have already found each other. Our love is not of two years only, I am certain, and it cannot end so soon ; it is but a journey that I am about to take, nothing more. The soul is not only immortal—it is everlasting.

Take courage, think of me, and each day say to yourself, as life advances, “Yet a day nearer him who loves me better than himself.”

If you ever need a friendship beyond all question, seek it in my friend Cadanet, of whom I have so often spoken ; he is my Pylades.

Adieu, my beautiful bride ! my well-beloved, my cherished wife ! I regret only you and him ; all else is so little worth. Farewell ! Courage !

MARK.

MARK'S JOURNAL.

6th October. My farewell letters to my bride and my friend finished, I started out on horseback. While riding towards the appointed place, I gave Kadour, who accompanied me, my orders and instructions that he might send my letters, arrange matters at St. Jean, and start for Africa, if I should be killed.

"Sidi, lieutenant," said he, "while you fight, I pray. Allah is great! Allah loves spahis."

I was not so much preoccupied as to be unable to laugh at this divine protection accorded especially to the spahi.

I was fearful of being late, but reached the ground before my adversary. His seconds, Doctor Thibaud and la Chapelaud, were conversing with Raoul. Boc, with his two hands in his pockets, was stamping impatiently in the dew.

"Gentlemen," I said, "I ask pardon for having made you wait—but I do not see the swords."

"We have the choice of weapons," said la Chapelaud, dryly, "and have determined on pistols."

"As you please," I replied, rather piqued at his pragmatism; "only, pistols often miss, and I swear to you this is to be a duel to the death. M. Mauvezin, buffeted as he has been, cannot be of a different mind."

"We were insulted, and we have the first fire," replied the little man, emphatically.

"Sir," remarked the doctor to Raoul, "here are two seconds who do not agree. I do not know if M. de la Chapelaud has bitten a poker this morning, but he is very savage. I think it strange that on his own authority he has changed the choice of weapons. Yes—

terday we arranged that the duel was to be fought with swords."

"I am for swords," cried Boc.

"And I also," added Raoul.

"And I," said the doctor, "have a horror of gunshot wounds; one never knows what they are. They present most singular phases. Besides, the pistol is the weapon of the awkward."

"Adalbert will decide," replied M. de la Chapeland. "As his two witnesses cannot agree, according to custom, he will give the deciding vote. But why does he not come? It is already half-past eleven, and I have not yet breakfasted."

"You ought to have taken that precaution; you will get thin," remarked the doctor.

"That is impossible!" said Raoul.

"Raoul," exclaimed the little man, angrily, "you bore me with your jests. I shall go."

I asked if this appointment were a jest. My adversary did not come, and one of his seconds was leaving, on pretence of being hungry; but I swore that I would find M. de Mauvezin, as I did not intend that the affair should rest here.

"Listen, M. Valery!" said the doctor, "and you also, gentlemen," added he, gravely, addressing my seconds. "We seem to you to occupy a ridiculous position, and you fear this may end in a comedy. Well, I do not believe it possible for the duel to take place to-day, at least. Every moment I fear that I shall be summoned to Chizé on important business. I took the marquis thither after the violent fainting fit, which you saw; and as he left the carriage, he was again very ill. I stayed at his side till six this morning, and I could not persuade him to put off this duel.

He will come, dead or alive, unless they send for me to say that he has again lost consciousness."

The doctor spoke so seriously that we could not doubt him. He was not an intimate friend of the marquis, and made no appeal to my forbearance. Raoul, who could not suppress his raillery, even under the gravest circumstances, asked the doctor if M. de Mauvezin were ill from sickness or from emotion. La Chapelaud wished to take up this ill-timed jest; but the doctor cut him short with his peculiar coolness, answering:—

"M. de Mauvezin has proved his courage a thousand times in conflict with the beasts of the forest. We have seen him rip up a boar; you know, M. Valery, whether or not he was slow. He is a devil with horses, a real break-neck driver; but cases are not wanting in which perfectly brave men waver in these cold and stupidly cruel things, called affairs of honor. For my part, I admit that last night I did all I could to dissuade him; I failed. Will, therefore, is stronger in him than emotion, even if he feels any emotion. This is the answer to M. de Vinceaux's question."

"You may add," continued la Chapelaud, "that Mauvezin has already fought and killed his man. The affair made enough noise, and M. de Vinceaux is not ignorant of it."

"That is no reason," replied the impassive doctor. "Emotion may be great without paralyzing the will, as I have had the honor of telling you. Now, gentlemen, let me assure you that the marquis is really ill; seriously perhaps, and that his sudden attack presents many of the features of cholera. Perhaps at St. Jean he drank something too cold, while heated; some

temperaments cannot support iced beverages. In short, he suffers severely."

"Let us still await him, gentlemen," I replied; "let us wait for some time, if necessary; and if M. de Mauvezin comes here, I shall declare myself ready to fight now, or defer the duel to another day."

This decision did not please la Chapelaud, who was hungry, nor Boc, who was cold; but we had not to wait more than a quarter of an hour longer. At length a carriage, driven at full speed, appeared, and the marquis calmly descended from it. He looked pretty well, though his eye was somewhat sunken, and I thought that his skin was slightly discolored. He offered no excuse for being late, simply saying to the doctor:—

"You explained that it was against my own will?" Then, turning to la Chapelaud, "I am for pistols, having suffered so during the night that my knees tremble, though my hand is steady."

The pistols were examined and the distance measured off. M. de Mauvezin fired first, after taking a long aim. I have often looked death in the face. I will admit that I was moved this time, but by a whimsical idea; seeing before me this red head and crimson face, these greenish-blue eyes, animated with cold fury, I believed that I recognized—perhaps I *did* recognize—Dhu-Lug, he who killed me in the forest of Ar-Denan, perhaps on this spot where we now fought.

I heard Raoul call to the marquis:—

"Fire, then!"

A ball whistled very close to my ear, and lodged in a tree behind me. It was my turn. Disdaining to take aim, as my adversary had, I fired quickly; he fell flat on his back, remaining motionless.

They thought him dead. I did not think so. A man wounded in front by a ball, always falls forward. The doctor hurried up to examine him; he was not wounded. My ball had glanced along his shirt-collar, without touching him; nevertheless, he had fainted. The doctor made us feel the weakness of his pulse, the insensibility of his skin, the stiffness of his limbs. It was a kind of catalepsy.

"If I had not seen him in the same state yesterday evening, I should believe him dead; but I hope to arouse him again. He must, however," he added, with the sinister gayety of an old practitioner, "get into the habit of it; relapses are dangerous."

I was astonished to observe that M. de Mauvezin kept his color even in this grave crisis.

"It also surprises me," remarked the doctor, looking at him. He wet a handkerchief in a puddle of rain-water, and bathed the sick man's face. The handkerchief was covered with red; the poor devil, really ill, or ill from fright, as Raoul said, had painted his cheeks like a woman to hide his pallor.

"Well," said Raoul, in a whisper, "I was always certain that he was painted. The ladies complimented him on his rosy cheeks and fresh color when he was rosy; but he led a wild life in Paris, the roses withered, and he replaced them with paint."

Under the doctor's treatment the marquis revived a little; but he could not speak, and appeared not to know where he was. His seconds placed him in his carriage, and here I am, back again and unwilling to relate the whimsicality of this absurd adventure. The marquis is ill—I cannot doubt it; but was he seized with a kind of cowardice on the duelling ground? He must return to it, and resolve to die from some other

cause than fear; so I will not throw my farewell letters and my will into the fire. Coward or not, M. Duluc shoots well, and may kill me. I need only to change the date of my will and of my adieus.

My dear Cadanet, I am sad, frightfully sad! The thought of vengeance, the hope of chastising a wretch, has sustained me since the terrible revelation of that night. Now I fall back upon myself; my prey has escaped me, and this wound, this bite of envy, this calumny—for I know that it is a calumny—rends my heart. No! that odious girl lied. Marguerite is pure; she could have defended herself to the death; and, besides, perhaps Mauvezin may not have even dreamed of such a crime. Fanny loves him—she is jealous of him, or she hates me; I am certain that she detests my poor Marguerite. Yet Marguerite tells me that Mauvezin wished to detain her forcibly, to make her dismount, and that he seized her foot. She was compelled to a desperate flight—she who can scarce manage a horse. On her return she sank, overcome with fear, anger, and fatigue. That evening she did not await me; she did not disquiet herself in relation to my long *tête-à-tête* with Fanny, of whom formerly she was jealous. The next day she was pale; she shook with indignation while recounting her adventure of the previous evening to me and Mme. d'Astafort. According to Fanny, she told but half the truth! When I think that everything in the recital of that pitiless creature is possible; not only possible, but probable! But Marguerite is frank and brave; why could she not have told me? “I am ruined, but I am without reproach! I have been the victim of fate—outraged by a wretch—kill him! avenge me!” Yes, 'tis true, the strongest wo-

man is weak in presence of the grief of those she loves. "She feared to make you suffer," said Fanny. Besides, Fanny, doubtless, frightened her in relation to de Mauvezin's skill and *courage*—she believed that he would certainly kill me. Poor child, how she must have suffered!

But she does not suffer; she has been rosy, smiling, gay, from the moment our marriage was determined upon. She danced the *bourrée* so gayly that night! She was so little troubled by de Mauvezin's presence, looked at him with such disdainful calmness when he dared to invite her to dance! She relied so implicitly on my promise not to insult him, that she noticed nothing between us. No, I am mad—it is not true! There is nothing true in it! Mauvezin himself does not know of what I accuse him; he is a fool. Perhaps he intended to compromise her; he deserves a lesson, and shall not escape it; but I wrongly interpreted his words. "*It is too late.*" What did he mean? Nothing but that he now understood Marguerite's refusal, and that M. Désormes had been trifling with him.

Never mind, I have broken the ice; he must bite the dust, the cataliptic Lovelace—for holding Marguerite's bridle, and pressing her foot.

6th October. I will say nothing to Marguerite. Fanny and her mother left St. Jean the day after the ball; I have not seen her since; I never wish to see her again. When Marguerite is my wife, I shall tell her to drive away this viper. My wife! Marguerite my wife! My life's dream realized, and a poisonous arrow pierces my heart! M. Duluc is still very ill; the doctor thinks that it is cholera. Oh, if he should die without my being avenged! Avenged for what?—for

an evil thought only? I have only puerile motives for my aversion. Why hate to such a degree the rival I have supplanted? Is he not sufficiently punished, sufficiently humiliated? Marguerite seemed to think that I could not feel hatred toward him; she has such faith! Doubtless, I am culpable towards her. May she never know, poor child, never think, how much I suffer.

8th October. He is still in the same state—feverish and without connected thoughts. If I should go to see him? Perhaps, in his delirium, the truth may escape him. But his mother will not let me approach him. Perhaps she knows that we have fought, that we must fight again. I have neither the right nor the courage to wound a mother's heart.

I have been to the lodge, as if for a walk. It is only a hut; the keeper is so deaf, so decrepit, so stupid, that he seems to me incapable of lending himself to an outrage. To hold a struggling horse, he would not have the strength! I tried to make him talk; he could not understand my innuendoes, but smiled with a stupid look. He has a son, perhaps a nephew; I did not think of asking him if he lived alone. Dolin has told me that he lives alone with his old wife, and that their children live at a distance; they are good people. Then Fanny lied.

Marguerite complains of not seeing me all the time. I answer, that she passes her time in trying on her new dresses, and that I am occupied with my inheritance—with which, however, I never trouble myself. The child is delighted to show me her beautiful *toilettes*—the presents with which her father thinks it necessary to load her. Fanny sent her a necklace. I tore it from her hands, forbidding her to wear it;

everything coming from Fanny must be poisoned. My roughness amazed and frightened my darling bride.

What have you against Fanny? It is true she has faults, but when one is happy everything must be forgiven.

Happy! Marguerite is happy? Then she is pure! Oh! yes, her heart is as clear as the heavens! If she had been profaned, she would not understand it. Besides, had she not fainted? I believe, and I do not believe—what torture!

Whilst near the statue this evening, I became calm. I gazed at it long. Marble! O purity of marble! Art thou, then, such a merit? What matters this spotless whiteness of which thou art not conscious, peaceful Callirhoé! The price of innocence is in the heart which preserves it. Nothing has soiled that of Marguerite. No, she is no more profaned than this statue can be by the embraces of a madman!

Was he mad who loved Galatia? Love of marble! Always! It is a fixed thought; I feel it! The horror of pollution! Is it a cruel prejudice, or an unjust hardship, savage instinct perhaps! I prefer to abandon myself to the doubt which tortures me, since I cannot overcome it. Yes! I accept the frightful doubt; I have the courage; I will brave it; and I will trample it under feet. I will be Marguerite's proud and happy husband. I will ask for no humiliating confession. I have abstained from all questions that might sully the holy purity of her mind; I will even abstain from all complaints that may wound her faithful heart.

9th October. How beautiful is this marble! How chaste this Callirhoé! If, like Pygmalion, I loved

only an ideal, a statue, I should not suffer the tortures of jealousy!

I scarcely dare confide to the paper the access of delirium that I experienced this morning. No matter! I must render to myself an account of my feelings. I must analyze them, I promised this to Cadanet. If it is a disease of the brain, he will aid me to combat it. I await him impatiently. He will rally me, and make me blush for myself.

But this statue is not the work of man, it is that of God! What artist could so perfectly imitate nature? Is it not Callirhoé herself? Cannot her life have been suspended?

What is this mysterious latent life? Perhaps the savant whose theories on metamorphism I so despised was right, though he only saw half the question. He saw the substance transformed, he verified the mysterious operations of death. Yes, this is perhaps a woman who has lived, who has loved, and whom death surprised in all the glory of her youth and beauty; but her soul—her soul which could not fall inert under the constraint of material transformation, her soul which lives in me by remembrance, by thought, and which exists, perhaps, for me through visions, and through mysterious appeals, which my senses translate as they can! O Callirhoé, if this is thy beautiful body, and if thy wandering soul seeks to fill its former receptacle, cannot love bring about this miracle? Hast thou not called to me in my dreams? Give me back thy love; give me back life; tear me from the nothingness of the tomb.

These confused thoughts burnt themselves into my brain. My eyes fixed upon hers, fascinated by the moveless look, I cried:—

“Speak! come, speak!”

I felt my forehead pressed as by a hand of iron. My blood rushed to my heart. Her mouth moved, she smiled, and through her parted lips I saw two rows of pearly teeth; the sound of a voice which I remembered to have heard before, spoke to me in a strange language, which I did not understand. I believe, however, that it was the words, *remember, oaths, gods, Cabires*, pronounced in the Oscan language. She extended her right hand toward me, and showed me a large golden bracelet heretofore hidden beneath her stone draperies. I had read the same characters graven on the bronze plate. Callirhoé! yes, it is you; the darkness is dispelled, I recognize you, and I love you forever.

Not knowing what I did, I took her in my arms, my hand rested on her palpitating bosom, the lips that I pressed to mine were moist and warm; her arms drew me to her heart, and, intoxicated with a happiness that I could not define, I rained burning kisses on her beautiful body. Then, mad with terror, and quite beyond myself, I rushed precipitately from her; I fled to hide myself in the woods, as if I had committed a crime. I threw myself upon the ground, and, buried in the heath, I remained overcome. Little by little, the fresh air revived me. The sun shone upon the leaves; a path of white sand lost itself in the fern, yellowed by autumn; it was a world for the diminutive things of creation: beetles, with gilded wings, chased golden flies which attracted them by poisoning themselves in the air through the rapid movement of their wings; a green lizard basked in the sun and scattered the sand in showers. There was no noise

but the chirp of the cricket and the rustling of the wind through the high branches of the trees.

"Come," I said to myself, on returning to real life, "I have experienced what may be called a veritable hallucination. To have seen this marble move! to have believed that it spoke to me! and this name of Callirhoé, which I have read beside mine on an imaginary bracelet! And Marguerite? I forgot her for an instant; but she was also to blame—talking to me always of the angry glances of this statue, as if eyes of glass could have either a good or bad expression. And Dolin, who pretends to have heard her sigh! and old Carnat! and I, also, who have invented such a mass of nonsense! I have worked too much; I have made too many journeys into the past; I have fed my brain on dry researches and hypotheses, and my poor reason seeks to escape. Besides, I have been so annoyed for the last few days! I must regulate all this. I will shut up Mme. or Mlle. Callirhoé somewhere, where I cannot see her, and will not look at her until I become calm—quite calm. Nevertheless, I do not want any one to touch her; I feel myself becoming furious with jealousy at the thought that some one will place a hand on that soft and delicate skin. But, once again, it is but marble!"

I went to the house and mounted my horse; I had need of exercise and recreation to drive away the thoughts which agitated me. Chance led me to Dressais—to the meadows bordering the Indre. Once before I had been on that spot, and I remembered that there, more than two years ago, I had first declared my love to Marguerite. I thought of the delights of my first emotions of love for my affianced. Then she alone filled my mind, I was not tormented by this in-

comprehensible passion for Callirhoé—a dead being, or a work of art, but certainly a child of my own imagination.

On returning over the heaths, I saw father Carnat's dog running towards me from a distance. When he came near my horse he jumped several times at his nose, as if to prevent his advance. Impatient at the dog's persistence, I dismounted to whip him; but in place of running away, he fawned upon me, and gazed at me with a human look. He licked my hands, scratched at me, ran a few steps, waited for me, and then returned towards me. I understood that he wished me to follow him. He led me to the woods of Aillands, and stopped near a copse, whence I heard a monotonous chant, broken by sighs and rattlings in the throat. It was Carnat, who was rolling and twisting on the earth as if in an epileptic fit. He muttered in strange tones an old chant of the bard Taliezin, translated into French:—

“I have existed in the ocean from all antiquity, from the day when the first cry was heard. I was not born of father or mother, but from the fruit of the Supreme God, like the primroses of the mountain and the flowers of the trees. I am formed of the earth, like the flower of the nettle. By the sage of sages I was marked in the primitive world at the time that I received life. I have gambolled in the night, I have slept in the dawn, and I was in the bark with Dylan, the son of the sea, when, like the lances of an enemy, the waters poured from the sky into the abyss. I was a shepherd long, long ago. I transmigrated into the earth before becoming learned. I have wandered, I have circulated, I have slept in a hundred islands—

in a hundred circles of existence. I have wandered, I have transmigrated!"

How did the centenarian gain a knowledge of these words? Without doubt, through tradition.

He rolled over again, and then became calm. His eyes, dilated beyond measure, then turned towards me.

"Let me die alone," he cried; "I wish to remember—ah! you are the warrior, Mark. I leave you the dog—your dog, I mean; does not all that is here belong to you? It is justice! A great misfortune approaches. In the times—the great ghost—Call—I know not what I say—too old—yes, it is that."

His eyes rolled frightfully in their sockets.

"The black dog—strangled, strangled!"

In the rattle I thought that I heard him say, "Dhu-Lug."

He rose, and drawing himself up to his full height, he turned his eyes heavenward, as if called by the voice of God.

"I am here," said he, and fell dead.

His dog jumped upon him, licked his face, and uttered a lugubrious howl, then he came crouching to my feet.

I returned to St. Jean, to send some one to take up Carnat's body. His dog would not leave me. The analogy of the name Carnat with the Karnach of my story, this sudden death, this Celtic song, which carried me back into the past, this big black dog that followed me as the faithful Dhu formerly did, and this vague allusion to the name of Callirhoé on the lips of the dying man—all seem to prove clearly to me that what we call hallucination or insanity must be something else, which we do not know how to define; above all, when the sight, the hearing, the touch, all the

senses, in short, and facts considered inexplicable, heard or repeated by many persons at a time, are playing about me as they have been since the discovery of Callirhoé.

What is the use of fighting against evidence? I must hide this, and try to alarm no one. Marguerite is yet too young to be initiated into these mysteries. Her reason would give way, for even mine revolts.

Reason, reason! what art thou? The habit of a gross ignorance, of a mass of vulgar prejudices. Thou must submit, renew thy light, and open thy heavy eyes.

CADANET'S RECITAL.

I left Constantine as soon as I received Mark's letter, and arrived at St. Jean the 11th of October. I knew the ways of the house, through my friend's correspondence. I may say that I already knew M. Désormes and his daughter; my introduction was therefore neither long nor awkward. I do not like ceremony, and one hour afterwards I was installed in the room over the library.

Mark seemed to me very calm, which surprised me, after all he had written and told me. I feared to find him excited, and I found on the contrary, a man who reasoned, and coldly analyzed the flights of his imagination. He was much more amazed by Mlle. Fanny's insinuations about Marguerite than about the chimerical and amorous manifestations of the statue. The misfortune of which he believed his affianced to be the victim was for me only the atrocious invention of her rival. Mark was too absorbed and preoccupied to notice Mlle. d'Astafort's sighs and loving glances. I saw them on the first day of my

arrival at St. Jean, and I was struck with her manner of acting. I reassured Mark on his foolish uncertainties, and as he still doubted, I persuaded him to have a full explanation with his affianced, since he was resolved to marry her in any event.

I sought Mlle. Désormes, and told her that Mark had some hidden grief that he would not confide to me, but which she alone should know, and could dissipate. I left them together, and when Mark rejoined me, he was radiant with happiness, and said that the girl was so pure it had been long before she had even understood his uneasiness, and that he was not even sure that she had understood it at all. I also wished him to get through his engagement with de Mauvezin; to wait till she was married, and then, perhaps, leave her a widow, seemed to me more cruel than to fight at once. I went to Chizé; I commenced by presenting to the marchioness, as they had requested, the respects of Mlle. Désormes and Mark. She received them coldly but politely. I saw her son; he was pale and emaciated. Seated before the chimney, he stared with dull, almost unconscious, eye at the smouldering fire. To ask a dying man to fight was impossible.

"Do you come to bring me an apology from Mark Valery?" he said, in a feeble voice.

"No, monsieur, I come for your commands."

"I shall soon have none to give to any one. You see these burning coals, how they are consumed; I shall soon be like them."

I tried to cheer him, without success.

"It is neither love nor jealousy which has thrown me into this state. I had refused Mlle. Désormes; I accuse no one but her imbecile father, and I only in-

tended to revenge myself by indifference, when I was seized and tortured by this frightful illness. I would like to make my peace with the world before dying. Tell M. Valery that I forgive him for having sought to fix a senseless quarrel upon me. He must have been deceived by some invented story. Tell him, upon my honor, that I had no ill-will against him, nor against Mlle. Désormes."

"It does not relate so much to that," I replied, "as to an attempt you made the evening of the hunt to prolong a *tête-à-tête* with Mlle. Désormes against that young lady's will."

"I do not know," he replied, "how it has pleased Mlle. Désormes to interpret my conduct; but, upon my honor, this is what happened. It is very certain that I profited by the accident, to separate her from those with whom we were riding. I wished to propose to her, and see if her teasings were coquetry toward me for another. I was authorized by her booby of a father to pay attention to her, and I desired to stop her wild gallop in the rain, and, as I have no wish to conceal anything, to compromise my promised bride, to a certain extent. Was it not my right? Until then she had not refused me."

"But she had not said yes," I answered, "and it is necessary to know how far you intended to carry this pretended right."

"Ah!" said M. de Mauvezin, raising his feeble voice, "I hope no one will accuse me of having intended to commit an outrage. It would be carried before the court of assizes, and never did a Mauvezin—"

"That is enough, monsieur; and if it is thus, M.

Valery retracts, and regrets his course; I answer for him."

"Be it so, speak no more of it," said he, heaving a deep sigh; "I should have done better to marry—"

"Mlle. d'Astafort? There is yet time."

I hazarded this question on account of a doubt I had in my own mind. The young man looked troubled, and said simply:—

"How! Do you know? I have thought. I did wrong to refuse her. Well! if I recover, I shall do well to repair—I have done wrong—but will she forgive me?"

"If she does not pardon you, you will at least have done your duty."

I wished him better health, and returned to St. Jean. I gave Mark de Mauvezin's explanations, assuring him that they were sincere. They took an immense load off his heart, as may well be believed.

The evening of the day when the contract was signed, M. Désormes and his daughter were at Mme. d'Astafort's, Mark stayed at St. Jean to finish some business with M. Lormond. Profiting by the chance to see the country, I followed my host's carriage.

The ladies of Dressais did not expect us, and so they took a long half hour to dress themselves, before receiving us. Mme. d'Astafort, had put on the famous *puce*-colored silk, and the conjugal medallion. Mlle. Fanny, habited more simply in a black dress, and white collar over a red cravat, and looked really very handsome.

After a few minutes' chat about trifles, in which I recognized the underbred manners and inexhaustible loquacity of the fat dowager described in Mark's journal, I followed the young ladies to the meadows bor-

dering the Indre. The two friends had walked on. Mlle. Désormes stopped from time to time to gather water-lilies or other flowers, I likewise busied myself in looking for flowers to please my friend's future wife, when a loud cry made me look up; but I only saw Mlle. d'Astafort's black dress in the midst of the reeds. I ran to the river, which is deep and rapid at this spot. Fanny, silent and immovable, watched a blue ribbon floating on the water. The bubbles coming from the bed of the river showed me that it was here Mlle. Désormes had fallen. Without stopping to question her companion, I was about to spring into the water, when I saw Marguerite's fair head rise above the surface. I did not hesitate to seize her by the hair. I dragged the poor child upon the bank while she struggled without knowing what had happened to her. She was strangling; I did not know what to do. I bellowed like a bull for M. Désormes, who seemed to me a negligent father; and I consigned my friend Mark to the devil for not being with us. His affianced, a little recovered, looked around her, saw my spahi vest, took me for Mark, and hiding her wet face upon my breast, burst into tears. This was a salutary relief. She soon recognized me, and begged pardon for the mistake. I felt flattered. This was the first time my monkey face had been mistaken for that of Antinous. I asked how she had fallen—if it was in stooping over to pick a flower.

She told me she had slipped, and that Fanny, in trying to hold her back, had awkwardly pushed her. I turned to look back at Fanny, whose presence, in my anxiety, I had forgotten, and I saw her lying upon the grass.

"See!" said Marguerite, "how grieved she is; go to her assistance."

Fanny had fainted, if she was not pretending, and Mlle. Désormes needed my care. I took her to the house to make her warm herself, and insisted that she should change her clothes. When I had given her to her father's care, I turned to see Fanny. She was seated on the bank of the river, staring at the spot where her companion had disappeared.

"She is saved," I said, abruptly.

She uttered a cry more like anger than joy. Did she wish to rid herself of a rival? I could not avoid the suspicion, though I concealed it.

As soon as Mlle. Désormes was well enough, we started for St. Jean. When half-way there we met Mark, who was coming to meet us. After telling him what had happened, I asked if he had heard of it, that he stared so wildly.

"I had a presentiment of danger," he answered. "While buried in my papers with M. Lormond, I heard a burst of laughter in the library which surprised the notary as much as it alarmed me. I recognized Callirhoé's laugh. I remembered her threats; I trembled for Marguerite's safety."

"There! you are wandering again," I said. "It was Nanniche."

"No! there was no one in there. Never mind, you saved Marguerite."

He embraced me warmly, as if I had done something wonderful in not permitting his affianced to die.

While Dr. Thibaut was called to Mlle. Désormes to see that no ill effects should follow from the accident, I questioned M. Lormond, who assured me that he had also heard a woman laugh in the library; this did not,

however, persuade me that the statue had had anything to do with it.

The marriage was celebrated at the municipality on the 15th of October. Mark and Marguerite, being Protestants, were married by the minister. There was feasting all day and dancing all night. Mlle. d'Astafort behaved well, was handsomely dressed, and looked beautiful. She was so calm that I reproached myself for my suspicions. She left the room towards two o'clock. Mme. Marguerite Valery never thought of retiring, much to the displeasure of some rural jokers who had prepared for the married couple some little pleasantries in the *best taste*. These gentlemen found themselves obliged to leave the ball before the bride stopped dancing. I had gone to my room, and was sleeping to the sound of violins and the noise of the country dances down stairs, when Mark awakened me. He was greatly agitated, and held a letter in his hand.

"Here," said he, "is what Nanniche has just given me from Fanny, who gave it to her with the injunction not to deliver it till the moment when I should be about to join my wife."

"It is some nuptial jest, I suppose."

"Read, and you will see."

"St. JEAN, 15th October.

"Mark! it is the dead who writes to you, for when you read this letter I shall be no more. You must know the true reason of my suicide, and I wish to make you a full confession.

"Mark! two years ago you were to have been my husband. The first moment we met I loved you; but Marguerite profited by the advantages of beauty, of coquetry, and of fortune, to make you deaf and blind

to all but herself. After your departure I hid my grief; I silenced jealousy, and feigned friendship for Marguerite, that I might talk of you with my rival. It was a happiness. She read me some passages of your letters, and I understood perfectly that you would never love any but her. Through spite, through despair, I tried to withdraw my love from you. I wished to love Mauvezin; I believed myself beloved by him. But I discovered that he was a wretch; he sought Marguerite's hand. I was outraged, disgusted with everything. I despised all men. I heard with indifference the news of your return; but on seeing you, my passion for you, my hatred against Marguerite, were awakened, more impetuous, more invincible than ever. I then felt that I had never loved the other. I aided him in his projects; I encouraged him to seek Marguerite; I tried to persuade him that she fancied him. Oh! if on the evening of the hunt, he had had a little more mind and courage, how I should have been avenged! I should have met you in your grief, should have done so much, that you must have married me; perhaps from spite, but I should have been yours.

"Mauvezin had become hateful to me from not having known how to take from you the heart and hand of your beloved. I wished at one blow to preserve you from a duel in which you might be killed, and to punish him on my own account, for I alone, in other times—the story of the lodge happened last year—it was also after a hunt—Marguerite was not there. He swore to marry me. I punished my seducer with poison; he will die.

"As to Mlle. Désormes, the everlasting obstacle in my life, I should have rid myself of her by the same

means, had I not been prevented by the ties of blood, for she is my sister. My mother, seeing me so angry with Marguerite and hearing my vows of vengeance, thought to save her by revealing to me this delightful secret. Ah, why did help come to her the day before yesterday? The opportunity was so good! the river so deep! Then, Mark, there would have been but you and I in this world, and I should have loved you so much!

"I hoped till the last moment that your marriage would be broken off; and, besides that, I wished to convince myself perfectly of my wretchedness, by attending your wedding. I revelled in my sufferings; I savored them by saying, 'In an hour or two I shall have done with life.'

"Now, even if Marguerite were no more, you could never love a girl guilty of two crimes, and I feel that I must be hateful to you. This is why I die, saying, like the youthful Druidess of your legend, 'Perhaps one day I shall again find you,' and then you will love the unhappy and guilty Fanny, who accuses you, before God, of all the ill that she has committed through love of you, but who will be purified by the death which she inflicts upon herself.

"Farewell, farewell; be happy, if that is possible in this dreadful world.

"It is useless to inquire what has become of me. Adieu, Mark! I am going to death, pressing to my heart the Algerine collar which came from you, Adieu! I love you.

FANNY."

Mlle. d'Astafort's letter seemed to me only too serious. I said to Mark, "Your wedding should not prevent your seeking this unfortunate girl, and saving her in spite of herself." We made inquiries of

Nanniche. She told us that towards two o'clock in the morning she had seen Mlle. d'Astafort ascend to the room which she usually occupied while staying at St. Jean. At three she called Nanniche, and after giving her the letter for M. Valery, dismissed her, saying that she intended to retire. Without disturbing any one, we went to her chamber, where I expected to find her on a bed of agony. The key was on the outside of the closed door. Mark entered resolutely. The room was empty. Her ball-dress was spread over the chairs, the bed was untouched. We hastened through the park, to the edge of the fish-pond; but how search, on a dark night, under water for a corpse?

Nanniche, disturbed by our questions, assisted the search in her own manner. She ran to tell us that Fanny must have left on horseback, as her habit was not in the wardrobe. At the stables Kadour informed me that, in reality, she had gone out on horseback at half-past three. He was not surprised at this early ride, as Fanny, while at St. Jean, had several times gone out alone before sunrise. She had ridden towards Dressais. We mounted our horses, followed by Kadour. The fugitive had the start of us by an hour and a half, but by haste we hoped to overtake her. She was not at Dressais, and her mother, who had slept at St. Jean, had not yet returned. We retraced our steps to Ardentes, where we learned that towards four the rapid gallop of a horse, going in the direction of Jeu-les-Bois, or la Verrerie, had been heard. As she had not passed Dressais, which was on the Verrerie road, she must have gone towards Chus by Jeu-les-Bois and the Argurande road. We arrived at Chus towards nine o'clock, and as our horses had already travelled eleven leagues, we stopped to bait them. While they were feeding, I made inquiries, as I was

certain that no lady, alone and on horseback, could pass through the country without attracting attention. I learned that she had passed some two hours before, and had gone in the direction of Orsennes. We had lost so much time in going back from Dressais to Ardentes, and then returning half-way, that she had gained on us. We started again, but on reaching the cross-road to Agenton, we were puzzled. A little peasant told us he had seen her riding towards Touchards. There we could gain no information, and we retraced our steps, looking carefully for some clue to her course, when Kadour showed me a horse's shoe on the edge of a ditch, on the road which led upward to Chocate. We followed over the moist earth the tracks of a horse that had lost his shoe. The road was a dizzy one, jutting over the Creuse, which dashed and roared among the rocks six hundred feet below us, and I believe that if a carriage should upset at that spot it would fall without hindrance over this grassy and slippery declivity into the river below. The little earth parapet was no security for even a horseman. I also noticed that it was freshly beaten by a horse's hoof. Leaning over, I observed the long grass torn at the edge of the precipice, and beneath, under our feet, on the banks of the Creuse, a dead horse, which two peasants were examining. From where we stood I could not see if it were Fanny's horse, though I felt intuitively that she had dashed herself into the abyss.

We hastily galloped to Pin; the population were excited. Some peasant women were passing curiously round the door of the parsonage, without daring to enter.

I learned that they had brought thither a lady whose horse had killed her, and who was doubtless

the one for whom we were looking. We entered; it was really Mlle. d'Astafort, lying upon a mattress, her form concealed by a sheet. She was pale, her face bloody, her eyes sunken; she still breathed. The doctor, catching my arm, whispered as he left the room:—

“Nothing more can be done; she is a dead woman.” He took us for the husband and brother of the dying.

Fanny recognized Mark, and tried to give him her hand; but, uttering a heart-rending cry, she fainted from pain. I believed that she was dead. Mark knelt beside her; the attendants did the same, while muttering prayers in low tones. In a few minutes she reopened her eyes, and said in an indistinct voice to my friend:—

“Thanks! you came to save me! It is useless, all is over. Give me one kiss—your first and last. You cannot refuse it to a dying girl.”

With a great effort she passed her right arm, which was not broken, around Mark's neck, and pressed her cold lips to those of the man that she had loved so cruelly. Murmuring an indistinct word, and sighing feebly, her head fell back.

Mark arose; he was as pale as Fanny. I was not exactly glad; it is always sad to see a young and beautiful woman die; but in my inmost soul I felt that Fanny had done well to end her life of passion and folly. Had she boasted of imaginary crimes? Mauvezin was not dead; but Dr. Thibaut could not say that his attack was not caused by poison.

The people in the neighborhood attributed Fanny's death to an accident. They said that her horse must have taken fright, and, shying to the side of the ravine, slipped on the grassy slope and rolled to the

bottom of the precipice. A little goatherd, watching his flocks under the rock, had seen woman and horse dash over his head into the stony torrent beneath. They bounded from the rocks like balls.

Our fifteen-league ride at full speed, to be a quarter of an hour too late, had exhausted our horses. There being no means of transportation in this little out-of-the-way village, we had to stay there that night and the next day. After complying with the necessary formalities, we had the unhappy Fanny's body carried to Dressais. We preceded it, in order to tell her mother, who had learned nothing of the tragedy, and was seeking her everywhere. Poor woman! what a frightful scene! I remained with her. Mark went on to St. Jean, to inform his wife and father-in-law of the dreadful calamity, which we also attributed to accident. M. Désormes and his daughter immediately hastened to M. d'Astafort's. Mme. Valery, ignorant that Fanny was her sister, found consoling words to whisper to the unhappy mother; but I saw by the grief and silent tears of M. Désormes that he wept a daughter and not a stranger. It was past midnight when we returned to St. Jean.

The next day I was witness of a still more dreadful scene; but I do not wish to crowd events, and will let Mark relate his own story, as he told it to me a few days afterwards, when I questioned him closely:—

“After my wife and father-in-law left for Dressais, I was so overcome with the emotions and fatigues of the night before, that at eight o'clock in the evening I threw myself dressed upon my bed. I could not sleep; I heard nine, then ten o'clock strike. While the tenth stroke was still vibrating, some one knocked at the door which communicates between my chamber

and the library. I believed that it was my beloved wife. I was astonished at her returning so early from Dressais, and hastening with so much ardor for the first time to my arms; but such is her purity, that I could only bless her for such a proof of confidence.

"I wished to throw myself at her feet. I was paralyzed. She came in without a light; fearful that she might strike herself against the furniture, I exclaimed, 'Take care!'

" 'I can see perfectly,' she replied, in a strange accent. I had risen. I was searching for her around the room. Suddenly I heard the bed, which I had just left, creak terribly; I thought that it was breaking down. I ran to it, and felt myself encircled by arms cold as marble.

" 'Good God, how cold you are!' I exclaimed.

" 'Yes,' she replied, 'I am cold, very cold; warm me! Fanny also is cold now.'

"And she commenced to laugh, as the statue had laughed. I was terrified; I thought that I recognized Callirhoé's ghost, and, trembling, I asked her who she was.

" 'Your wife, your real wife! Say that you love me, that you will love none but me!'

"Her cold but supple limbs twined round me like serpents; her passionate kisses seemed desirous of tearing my soul from me.

" 'Swear to me now that you love me,' said she, straining me passionately to her; 'swear it to me before God—before the gods Cabires!'

"What a strange idea!

"But at length, thinking that all that I believed hallucination was but a jest of my wife, who

would end by discovering herself, I made every oath, and gave myself up to all the transport of passion, but without being certain whether I was awake or the sport of a delirious dream. Nevertheless, I heard twelve o'clock strike, and the rattle of a carriage which stopped before the stone steps. From that moment I can recall nothing till day broke, and with it the dreadful reality. The woman sleeping at my side was not Marguerite—it was Callirhoé. I sought to awaken her. Awaken marble! Her motionless arms, extended above her head, did not move; her eyelids, forever closed, could not open; this heart of stone could beat no more! It was the statue! but in a different position from that in which she was so well known. No draperies hid her perfect form. I was overcome, and stared fixedly at this antique Venus, who had been living a few moments before. Addressing her, I said:—

“What is life? The past and future—are they not words without meaning? Eternity is the present. Living or dead, what have I done since leaving you? Speak! since for you there is no time, no death! Answer!”

“She was silent, icy, petrified. To replace her on her pedestal would be impossible; her voluptuous attitude would no longer allow of her standing up, and what would be thought of this inexplicable circumstance? It would be necessary to hide her—to make her disappear. You know that Gallo-Roman coffin in the library—I raised the stone cover, and with a great exertion of strength, doubled by despair, I carried Callirhoé thither. I was certain that it was she, and I shut her up. The stone replaced, I walked

out on the heaths, wondering how to explain the disappearance of this demon—of this angel.”

This was Mark's story. I recommence mine, from the day following this strange night.

That day, M. Pillepuce and an Englishman, one of his friends, came to see Mark's precious relic. I knew that this Englishman had offered M. Désormes a large price for the statue, but Mark had always refused to sell it; the proposition even had irritated him, so that Marguerite had promised to dismiss the purchasers the next time they might come.

I was out walking when I met Mark; his gloomy, sullen looks surprised me. Had he passed the night with his wife? I dared not ask him. He seemed to fear my questions, and in an agitated, constrained voice spoke of the sad events of the last few days, and frequently mentioned Fanny's name.

I was rather gloomy at seeing his marriage inaugurated under such sombre auspices, and I tried to amuse him by speaking of Africa. He answered through politeness; he did not listen to me; he spoke at random, as if he had forgotten St. Jean and Marguerite. I recalled to his mind that the breakfast hour was approaching, and, though I felt a repugnance at speaking of the statue, I thought that it was better to warn him of the Englishman's visit and desire to see it. Mark shrugged his shoulders, without replying, and returned with me toward the house. It was nearly noon, and Mme. Marguerite had not appeared for breakfast. M. Désormes called Nanniche, to know what his daughter was doing; but the maid had not yet been summoned to her mistress' room. She presently returned, to say that Mme. Valery was not in

her chamber, and that her bed had not been slept upon.

Marguerite was sought for, but not found. M. Pillepuce and the Englishman were quietly conversing in the garden with Mark, who seemed quite calm. He told them that he had sent the statue to Paris. I imparted to him my uneasiness about his wife. He left the gentlemen, and we sought her together. In passing through the library, and seeing the statue, he turned pale and uttered a cry of terror. I asked what was the matter; I pressed him with questions; he did not answer me, and seemed endeavoring to collect his thoughts. M. Désormes and I were alone with him.

"Strange, strange!" said he, like a man in a waking dream. "Callirhoé still here!"

"What is there strange in that?" I asked.

"But, then," cried he, with horror, rushing to the antique sarcophagus, "who is within this?"

With superhuman force he raised the huge stone lid. A woman was beneath—it was his wife!

"My daughter!" cried M. Désormes. "Dead! dead! smothered! Monster, you have killed her!"

Mark stood impassive, with one hand grasping the stone cover, and with the other he tried to raise the body of his bride. M. Désormes threw himself upon her and drew her forth.

My poor friend let the stone fall; it broke. He burst into a frightful laugh—the laugh of a madman. M. Pillepuce and the Englishman, without knowing anything of what had happened, rushed in on hearing the noise.

"How!" said M. Pillepuce, "you told us that the statue was in Paris; and there it is. If you ask one

hundred thousand francs for it, Mr. Wilson will give them to you."

"The statue!" shouted Mark, a prey to a real burst of madness, and seizing a Celtic axe of brass, heavy as lead. "The statue! You wish to buy the statue?"

He was so terrible that the Englishman fled into the parlor and the chemist into a corner, on seeing Mark brandish his formidable weapon.

He struck the statue on the forehead. At the first blow the head flew to pieces; then he madly cut at the body and arms, and soon there was nothing left but a shapeless mass. At each blow of the axe he cried:—

"Woe, woe to thee, Callirhoé! Destruction to thee forever! Thou shalt be reduced to nothingness."

When he had finished his work of pounding the statue to dust, he rushed to the bronze plate.

"No more oaths!" he cried. "No more gods Cabires! Nothing more than void."

When he had finished his work of destruction, he threw his weapon aside, looked at me, and said with greater calmness:—

"Ah! you are here, Cadanet? You see that I have broken with the past; I have killed my infatuation. I am cool now. If these gentlemen," he added, with a heart-rending smile, "wish a piece of the *Great Ghost*, let them take it; they may then assure themselves whether or not this was a petrified woman."

I turned to M. Pillepuce, who, with a magnifying-glass in his hand, was absorbed in silent study of a fragment of the statue.

"Look," he said to me, "at this rosy streak in the marble. Would you not call it a vein?"

"Hush," I said. "Take as many fragments as you

want; the time is badly chosen for forming theories. Go! you see you cannot be attended to."

He left us; but I could not rid myself of the black dog, which would not leave Mark, and which, smelling the broken statue, howled lugubriously. The inexplicable despair of the beast disturbed me; and I confess I had some difficulty in avoiding the superstition to which Mark was a prey. I at length put the dog out of the room, and returning to my friend, said:—

"If your wife is dead, I do not know what we shall do to save your head."

"Without her, I am indifferent to everything; do with me what you please."

My poor friend burst into tears. I let him weep. Mme. Valéry recovered consciousness; but she hung between life and death for forty-eight hours. The second day the doctor announced to us that she was saved. She asked for her husband. She had no remembrance, no idea of the murder he had almost committed. She learned it later, at the same time that she heard of the destruction of the statue. Far from blaming Mark, she was delighted at the vengeance he had taken upon her imaginary rival. Since then she has told me what had happened on that night which so nearly proved fatal to her. Here is her exact account:—

"At midnight we returned from Dressais. My father was so grieved that he could not conceal from me the tie that bound him to Fanny. I stayed beside him, trying to console him, till three o'clock. Seeing him somewhat calmer and more resigned, I left him to go to my room. I was greatly disturbed and broken by the emotions of the day. I wished to go down to Mark; I was uneasy about him; I was afraid that he was ill,

and I had the right to be with him. I do not know what foolish fear possessed me; I remained standing, lamp in hand, without being able to come to any decision, when there broke on the silence of the night a sinister laugh which seemed to fill the air, and froze me with terror. I thought it was Fanny's spirit wandering around St. Jean. I fell upon my knees and prayed for her. I heard four strike, and the next minute a second laugh, more prolonged and more terrifying than the first; it seemed to come from the donjon, or from Mark's chamber. I felt a presentiment that he was ill, a prey to some nervous crisis. Trembling in every limb, I descended hastily; but, before daring to enter his room, I listened at the door. Profound silence reigned everywhere. This silence, in place of reassuring, frightened me. Mark had perhaps fainted. I resolutely opened the door; my light was immediately extinguished; I thought I saw a white figure before me, and I felt a cold hand press my arm like a vice. The pain was so great and sudden that I had not the strength to scream. I lost consciousness. Of what happened from that time until I found myself on the bed, I am ignorant. This is what happened to me, at least I did not dream it."

When Mme. Valery had recovered, Dr. Thibaut took me aside to speak of Mark's adventure.

"I hope," he said, "that it is a passing mental excitement; but the return of this state bordering on madness must be guarded against. You have influence over him; make him stop all absorbing studies, and make him amuse himself. He must leave St. Jean for a time. Take him from these surroundings which constantly recall his hallucination, and the recent sad events. His wife has equal need of change of air.

Take them to Africa, and let them pass several months there."

I followed the doctor's advice, and we started early in November. Father Désormes remained with Dolin; Mme. d'Astafort, braving the sneers of the world, came to live with him. Mark rented a pretty house in Algeria from Mustapha Superieur, and since the destruction of the statue—that is, for ten years—he has manifested no sign of "exaltation."

His good and charming wife, now the mother of a family, comes every year with her two sons and her daughter to pass the winter near us. The eldest is my godson; he will join the army, and be my heir, as I am still a bachelor.

Mark retired with the rank of colonel, and the cross of an officer. He would have risen to the highest rank if he had remained in the service; but he preferred overseeing his estates, with which father Désormes, who was living at Bellevue, no longer troubles himself. The faithful Kadour returned to the desert. The generosity of his master made him an important man; and what is most strange is that—thanks to his attendance on Mark in his nervous crisis—he has taken strange ideas into his head, and passes amongst those of his own religion for a diviner or prophet.

M. de Mauvezin, after more than a year's suffering and weakness, partially recovered. His health was never entirely re-established, and his face bears traces of premature age. Though he still sometimes hunts the wild boar, neither the artificial nor natural roses of his complexion ever returned to him.

The fragments of the statue were buried in the hypogeum. Noiraud still lives; he is so old that he has become quite gray. I never saw so ill-tempered a

dog; he detests every one but Mark and the geese in the yard, which doubtless he mistakes for those of the capitol.

I am not superstitious, I never believed that there was anything real in Mark's visions; but as others partook of his emotions to some extent, and of his hallucinations as to the statue, I have often asked myself if Fanny had not secretly and willingly played a part in these performances. Mark's imagination must have supplied the rest; in which, indeed, there is nothing surprising, considering his continual study, the wounds on his head, his grief, and his love. As to his beliefs, he has explained them himself, and, if I do not adopt them unreservedly, I confess that they please me.

Last year, while I was at St. Jean, Mark had the curiosity to make some excavations in the hypogeum, and his researches were not all unfruitful. Four feet under the earth we found oak planks, inlaid with metal ornaments, covering a male skeleton. Seven bronze statuettes, representing men, some with the heads of animals, were laid across the body, as if they wished to keep him in that spot. The skull, covered with long brown hair, was encased in a brazen helmet ornamented with wings of the same metal; necklaces of gold, and bracelets, surrounded bones white as ivory.

"Here I am," said Mark, "as I was buried two thousand three hundred years ago! I recognize the Cabires."

"Do you speak seriously?" I asked.

"Why not?"

"Mark, Mark, take care! For ten years your reason has not been in the least disturbed. I have a

mind to send to the devil these excavations and researches."

"Tranquillize yourself, my friend," replied he, "my reason is beyond all shocks now. This body may have been mine, as it may be that of some one else who bore a similar name, and with whom I have never had any intercourse. In seeing the remains of another being, no one can say I have not lived in this habitation; as for us, we have all lived in the world before. Listen to me, and you will understand my belief, which is that of our fathers, the Celts—the most beautiful, and, according to my idea, the truest in the whole range of metaphysical hypotheses.

"According to the religion of the Druids, who were, as you know, the teachers of Pythagoras, there are three phases necessary to every existence: the beginning in *Anneum*, the transmigration in *Abred*, and the fulness in *Gwynfyd*; and outside these three conditions nothing can exist except God.

"It is in the cycle of *Anneum*, where there is only darkness, bottomless abyss, chaos, and which contains the germs of all life in the state of involution, that life manifests itself—weak life, which is developed, which acts and is extinguished in order that it may transmigrate into *Abred*, the circle of voyages; that is to say, the era which envelops the whole order of nature, and in which every animated being is derived from death. This circle man traverses. We are in *Abred*, but we ought to try to merit an immediate passage to *Gwynfyd*, the circle of happiness; that is to say, the era in which every animated being is derived from life. Man will traverse it. We shall go to that Paradise. We may, nevertheless, be retarded by numerous migrations, by recommencing human

existence, by descending to brute life, or even falling back again into the chaos *Nnwen*, whence to recommence anew the transmigration into *Abred*.

"*Ceugant* is the sphere of the infinite, where, excepting God, there is nothing living or dead. No being but God can live there or endure it. Our thoughts can embrace neither boundless immensity nor eternity, nor the incommunicableness of *Ceugant*. It is the absolute. If we should reach there, we shall, without doubt, be absorbed by the Divinity.

"Let us then not occupy ourselves but with *Abred* and *Gwynfyd*, or with *Gwynfyd* and *Abred*, for they are complementary the one with the other. In *Abred*, man is at liberty to choose between good and ill. It is a period of trials and of combats, where he must learn to conquer his evil passions, and rid himself of the gross instincts brought by him from lower migrations. He may conquer them by study, by the force of love and moral courage, if he wishes to raise himself towards *Gwynfyd*, where knowledge, the consciousness of his soul and of his individuality, the remembrance and the fulness of love, are given him, besides the power of returning temporarily to *Abred*, but with the privileges of a dweller in *Gwynfyd*, in order that he may add fresh knowledge to the treasures of knowledge already accumulated by the remembrance of his past existences, and develop the conception of God, source of a good so extended, that a time will come when *Abred* will be destroyed, and when evil will return to nothingness.

"This is why I have imagined that I had lived in *Gwynfyd*, and had brought back with me into the sphere *Abred* the remembrance of my former existences. I have believed it, but I do not believe it

now. I feel perfectly sure that I have never left the period of transmigrations. My error nearly cost me dear; it was a vain suggestion of that too ardent inquisitiveness which youth carries into its studies. Think that at sixteen I was thrown, by the necessity of gaining a livelihood, into the difficult researches of a learned old German. I was launched into the midst of the most dreadful problems at an age when prudence is wanting, and when imagination is not restrained by judgment. I had nearly fallen a victim to my efforts to revive a personal remembrance of past times, which, if it exists for some (I doubt it), is but a rare exception. However, as the human soul has mysterious faculties, the limits of which it is not easy to fix, it is very possible that mine has again seized some sparkles in this foggy night of its anterior existences; but we may compare these incoherent visions to those presented to us in dreams. When I gave them a logical connection, I was against my will carried away by the logic of invention. At other times my imagination alone drew me into reveries, the rebound of which subdued my senses; this was hallucination! There is the danger, my friend; this is the threshold of madness. As soon as a man feels the first infatuation, he ought to stop; for beyond this madness, he will encounter mental death, idiocy. Once for all, rest satisfied on my account. I am in *Abred*; there I must cultivate intellect, of which reason is the rudder. I will never abandon it to the deceitful and unskilful hand of fancy. The care of making my wife happy, and of wisely bringing up my children, is a preservative which has rendered my cure very complete, and my task very easy."

MAURICE SAND.

H-4

H3



